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# THE JAMES BOYS AND THE DETECTIVES.

By D. W. STEVENS.





THE GREAT



THE JAMES BOYS  
AND THE ORIGIN



# THE JAMES BOYS AND THE DETECTIVES.

By D. W. STEVENS.

## I.

INTRODUCTION OF D. W. STEVENS TO THE NOTED BANDIT.

"Who do you wish to see?" the jailer of the Gallatin jail asked of the writer, D. W. Stevens, as we presented ourselves at the door of his office.

"Frank James, sir, if you please."

The jailer smiled and remarked:

"The colonel is receiving a good many visitors of late."

"Colonel? Why do you call him colonel?"

"Oh, because the newspapers have dubbed him colonel."

"Well, sir, can I see him?" I asked.

"Oh, to be sure!" the jailer said. "What is your name?"

"D. W. Stevens."

"What?" said the jailer, looking in astonishment at me; "not the author?"

"Yes."

"Well, well——"

"I beg your pardon," I said, interrupting any remark he was about to make, "but will you be kind enough to show me to the cell of Frank James?"

The jailer bowed and led the way into the front door, which was made of iron, and a very strong affair. The Gallatin jail is small, but very strongly built of stone, and all above ground instead of below.

Gallatin is a small town of about two thousand inhabitants, standing on a hill, with a very rough, broken country on the east. The Rock Island and Omaha branch of the Wabash railroad cross there.

Frank James was in the Gallatin jail for robbing the Rock Island train at Winston, in Davies county, Missouri, of which Gallatin is the county seat. Winston is but a few miles from Gallatin.

"Mr. James," said the jailer, taking me to the door of the cell of the great bandit, "here is a gentleman who wishes to see you."

"Who is he?" asked Frank James, fixing his keen blue eyes upon me.

"Mr. Stevens," said the jailer, who, closing the door, left me in the cell with the noted bandit and highwayman.

Mr. James was chewing tobacco as usual, and fixing his nervous eyes upon me, said:

"Be seated, sir, and tell me what is your business."

The cell was narrow, and had but one chair, which he offered to me, while he took a seat upon the bed.

"My name, Mr. James, is D. W. Stevens."

"What, the author who has written so much about me?"

"I have written some about you," I said.

"Well," said the outlaw, chewing his tobacco nervously, "you have told some things I would rather you had kept; but in the main, Mr. Stevens, you have treated me fairer than the newspapers. In substance, what you have written is true, but the newspapers have willfully lied."

"I am glad, Mr. James, that you have given me credit for being truthful. I have come as near at the truth as I could from what data I had."

"Why, sir, I could not have told it near as straight myself. You authors must be wonderful fellows. You seem to get at a fellow's very thoughts."

"Mr. James, I came to see you to ask a favor."

"What is it?"

"I would like to hear you relate some of your own adventures, which I will take down in short hand to publish. I want, and I think the public wants some of your adventures from your own lips. They want real facts and not fiction."

Frank James reflected a few moments, and then said:

"You have written a great many of my adventures, Mr. Stevens, but not all. It would be the work of a lifetime to do that. As to the Winston robberies I will say nothing, nor of any robbery of which I am accused. Let them prove me guilty. But I don't mind telling you a few of my adventures providing you will say nothing about it to any one in Gallatin, and not publish them until after the trial."

Of course I consented to so reasonable a request, and reclining on his bunk, his hands clasped behind his head, Frank James told

## II.

THE STORY OF HIS FIRST ADVENTURE.

My life has been a very eventful one, and were it written in full no one would believe it.

I was but little more than a boy when I enlisted under Quantrell, the great Missouri guerrilla. Now, sir, you



would be surprised to know that three-fourths of that desperate band of Charles William Quantrell were comparatively beardless.

We were nearly all boys. I went with Quantrell because he meant fight and kill, and so did I. I hated the Union people, and so did he.

I was only a boy, as I said, when I first enlisted, and it was the second day after my enlistment that a daring fellow, only a year or two older than myself, named Arch Clements, came to me and said:

"Frank, wouldn't you like to go on a scout to-day?"

"What's that?" I asked, for I was then so green in military affairs that I had not the remotest idea what he meant by scout.

"Why, go with the squad to hunt Feds. We are going to go up pretty close to Liberty, and there will be fun."

"How many are going?"

"Oh, not more than a dozen."

"Will there be shooting?"

"Very likely."

"Then I will go."

"All right, Frank, I will try and get you on the scout, if I can."

Arch went away and left me by myself.

I had an excellent bay mare, and she was remarkably swift of foot. You, perhaps, would like to know how I came by her, well, I don't care if I tell you. She formerly belonged to an old Federal named Joe Neff, and I borrowed her of him to ride in the rebel army.

I went to my bay mare and was rubbing her down, when Arch, who, young as he was, was an orderly sergeant under Quantrell, came along and told me to saddle up at once.

I did so.

I was armed at that time with a small double-barreled shot-gun, and two revolvers.

Arch had scarcely been gone a minute before I was in the saddle and joined the small scouting party, which I saw forming for the scout.

In a few moments a dozen as brave young madcaps as ever took the saddle were dashing away over the prairie.

We cared for nothing.

Some of us might never come back, but we were perfectly reckless as to consequences.

Arch Clements and I had been schoolmates together, and consequently preferred each other's society, we rode a little in the rear.

After we had gone about ten or fifteen miles in the direction of Liberty, the older men in our party became more wary.

One or two were thrown out in advance.

As we were going up a hill, our advance guard came back and said about fifteen Federal soldiers were coming down that road.

It was decided at once to form an ambuscade, and bush-whack them.

We rode back half a mile to where the bushes were very thick, and grew quite close to the road. Then we rode out in the woods a bit further and dismounted, fastening our horses to saplings, and crept back to within a few feet of the road.

Lieutenant Vest, afterwards a colonel, was to give the order to fire by discharging his gun.

When we got to the side of the road we crouched down in the thicket, with our guns cocked, and waited for the enemy to come up. Soon we could hear the tramp of horses' feet, and then some of the boys became a little nervous and anxious.

I closed my teeth, and resolved to kill my man if I could.

Nearer and nearer they came, until we could hear the snorting of their horses, and the voices of men engaged in low conversation.

They evidently were entirely unconscious of any danger, and did not dream that a deadly foe lay concealed in that dark brushwood. One young fellow in the lead was telling a comrade of his mother, and how she wept when he left her to fight for his country.

His mother was destined never to see her son again.

Our boys became nervous and could not wait the signal.

Before the head of the column had more than half passed our line "bang!" went a shot-gun.

Instantly the whole line was ablaze, and the woods resounding with the echoes of our guns.

I had fired before I hardly knew it, and think I shot with my eyes shut, our officer shouting to us to reserve our fire.

We could now do so, for every gun was emptied, and through the rifts of smoke and shattered leaves we could see two or three forms lying in the road, still in death or writhing in pain. Among them was the young fellow who had been talking about his mother.

Just at this moment a bugle up the road sounded a cavalry charge.

"Now, boys, git to your horses as quick as you can," cried our lieutenant.

As though dismayed and cowed at our work we sped to our horses. I had reached my mare when there came a roar of hoofs and crashing of underbrush. The cavalry were on us.

"Mount, if you would save your lives," shouted Vest. Many were already in the saddle.

Now the Federals were in sight.

"Crack!"

"Crack!"

"Bang!"

"Bang!" went their carbines and pistols until the woods seemed ablaze with the flashing of fire-arms, and our ears were deafened with the sharp reports.

Bullets whistled about us like hail.

I had just put my foot in the stirrup to mount, and my mare becoming frightened and furious by the roar of fire-arms, refused to stand. I clung to her as best I could, but could not get in the saddle.

At this moment my friend Arch Clements came galloping up through the woods.

Though the Federals were at least a hundred yards away he fired a shot and killed one, for I saw him fall like a log from his horse.

He seized my mare by the bit, hurled her to her haunches, and held her thus while I sprang in the saddle.

We turned about and rode like the wind, Arch keeping at my side. The Federals fired and killed five of our men.



They pursued us, and the hurry-scurry, helter-skelter mad gallop we had through those woods I will never forget. Their bullets whistled about our heads, yet we flew on for our lives.

It seems there were a larger force of Feds in our rear than we had any idea of, and they were so enraged at being bushwhacked that we knew we would all be cut to pieces if they came upon us. There would be no taking of prisoners on either side.

Arch Clements and myself became separated from the others, and galloped away as fast as we could go across a prairie, having been forced to leave the woods.

A party of a dozen or more pursued us and fired, until my bay mare was struck in the flank.

She ran for some distance, the blood streaming from her side, and then she gradually began to grow weaker.

"Mount here behind me," said Arch Clements riding up to my side. It is useless to say that I obeyed his advice or order to the letter.

His horse under the double load soon began to show signs of weariness, and the Feds were gaining on us. We passed a field, a farm-house, and then came to another forest into which we plunged.

The bullets of the Feds were constantly whistling nearer and nearer our heads.

We now resolved upon a stratagem. We were near a creek, and riding into it we sprang off our horse, keeping our weapons out of the water.

I had lost my gun during the flight and had only my revolver. We beat the horse until he swam the creek and ran off into the woods on the other side.

Then we waded down the stream for some distance, until we came to where a large drift of trees, and logs, and limbs stretched across the small stream. We concealed ourselves in the midst of the rubbish, taking care to keep our bodies well under water, our pistols dry, and ourselves well concealed beneath the drift wood.

We had scarcely ensconced ourselves beneath this debris and rubbish, before the Union soldiers were all along the banks of the creek, and some had even swam their horses over on the other side.

Fortunately for us the sun had now gone down and twilight began to gather over the forest and stream. The soldiers dismounted, and even climbed over the logs and brushwood and debris composing the drift.

One stood on the drift directly over our heads, and Arch Clements in a spirit of mischief pressed the muzzle of his revolver between two logs, actually touching the sole of the soldier's boot. Arch really enjoyed this exciting game of hide and seek. The soldiers stayed on the drift for an hour, and we could hear them talking and threatening and swearing what they would do with us if found.

Arch was half a mind to come out and fight them all, but I knew that it would never do to do that, and so kept him quiet.

At last our enemies left us, and at night we crept out of the water, chilled and benumbed by our long exposure to the cold and wet, and made our way to the camp of Quantrell. I have had many other narrow escapes, but that, my first adventure, tried my soul about as severely as any I ever had in my life.

"You must excuse me from anything further until after lunch, Mr. Stevens. This is about my lunch hour," said the great bandit.

I took this as a gentle hint to go, and informing Mr. James I would return at three, I gathered up my manuscript and left him.

### III.

#### SAVED BY A WOMAN.

"WOMEN are far more patriotic than men," said Frank James, reclining upon his couch that evening, his active jaws vigorously at work upon a quid of tobacco. The great bandit by the way is an inveterate tobacco chewer.

"Let a woman once make up her mind that a certain principle is right, and she will die by that principle," Frank went on.

She knows no such thing as yield, and frequently puts the courage of man to shame.

The war for the Union developed thousands of patriotic women, both North and South. I believe that Southern women as a class were most patriotic. They seemed to love the cause their husbands and sweet-hearts espoused.

Many of them for the aid they gave us guerrillas were sent to prison, and some very badly mistreated. This filled us guerrillas with the spirit of the devil, and we became demons. Lawrence, Kansas, and the battle-field of Centuria tell the story of what they made us.

But I want to tell you of a woman who once saved my life.

It was the second year of the war, and I had become pretty well used to hard knocks. We had fighting almost every day. It's true our battles were small affairs, which history never deigned to notice, but they were none the less severe.

There were five of us one day riding into Independence. There was not a soldier there the day before, and there were none in sight when we approached the town.

We dismounted at the hotel and went in.

Three of my comrades drank, but Fletch Taylor and myself never touched a drop. We always kept our heads and nerves clear. We had a fellow with us named Elijah Hargus, and he had become a most desperate guerrilla.

He with the other two were drinking at the bar when we heard the tramp of horses' feet.

Fletch Taylor and I at once sprang to a window to look out, and there we saw at least a score of Union cavalry just in the act of dismounting.

We had our revolvers in our hands, and our first impulse was to fire and dash out to our horses. But they were already between us and the hitching-posts at which our horses were fastened.

"It won't do, Fletch," I said, "we have got to get out by the back way, and through the alley on foot."

"What is it?" cried Hargus, with an oath, throwing down his glass and breaking it to pieces.

"The Feds are at the door," Fletch Taylor answered.

Hargus and his two companions had been drinking, and at once drew their pistols. We told them it was useless to fight so many, and we could make our way out at the back door.

They swore they'd have blood. Hargus met the young



officer who commanded the Union squad, and shot him dead on the porch.

Instantly it seemed as if the very heavens were raining a storm of bullets into that old tavern.

Hargus was killed and his two companions mortally wounded.

The landlord was killed, and a boy behind the bar wounded.

Fletch Taylor had a small pistol-shot in his left arm.

We both ran as fast as we could out at the back door, and the smoke in the room doubtless hid our retreat.

The Feds, enraged, charged through the hotel, and set it on fire.

Fletch and I were discovered, fired on, and chased from alley to alley, from corner to corner.

The pursuit was vindictive. I saw Fletch pause behind a pig-pen, shoot down a soldier, mount his horse and ride away.

I was now alone in the town, and ran wildly about, not knowing where to go.

"Come here! come here!" cried a woman's voice, and I saw her standing in the door-way beckoning me to her.

I darted in at the door, after assuring myself no Federal soldier had discovered me.

I was scarce in and the door closed before the wild clatter of horses' feet came galloping by. Men were dismounting at every house, and searching for the fugitives.

"Where shall I hide?" I instinctively asked.

"Under the bed," she said, pointing to a bed which stood in the room. It was an old-fashioned, high-post bedstead, and there was a curtain which reached quite to the floor.

She drew the curtain aside, and in a moment I had crawled under the bed.

My heart beat violently as I heard a loud thumping at the door from the pistol-butts of my enemies.

My lady protector was in no particular hurry about opening it.

The blows came loud and savage. The soldiers were furious at the cold-blooded assassination of their young captain, as they chose to term the summary manner in which Lige Hargus had killed him. I think a moment more and they would have kicked the door down, when my protectress went to the door and partly pushed it open.

"What do you want?" she asked, snappishly.

"We want that young rebel who is hiding here," a gruff-voiced Federal said.

I trembled in spite of myself, but lying under the bed with my revolver cocked in my hand, I resolved to defend myself to the last, and that I would sell my life as dearly as possible.

I held the curtain just the least aside, and there crouching or lying on the floor, waited the issue of events.

"I have no one hiding here, sir," the woman answered unhesitatingly, but the fellow would not believe her.

"I must come in," he said.

"Why?" she asked.

"To search your house."

"Will you not believe my word?"

"I beg your pardon, madam," said the soldier, trying to be polite in his way, "but duty is duty. The rebel

scoundrels killed our captain in cold blood this morning, and we are bound to search your house. We have been told you sympathize with the South."

"Is that any reason I should lie?" she asked, beginning to sob violently. "Is that any reason you should insult me? that I am to be harassed—annoyed every day?"

"No, madam, no," said the soldier, who was a sergeant, beginning to clear his throat. "But you see I am ordered to do so. I can't help it. I must, madam."

"Well, sir, you can, but I want a guard afterward placed over my house, to see that I am not molested any more; and if there is a fugitive here don't let him come near my house."

"That's very reasonable," said the soldier, "and we can easily see that that is done."

"Then come and look about the room," she said, advancing towards the bed.

I now began to fear that she was going to give me up.

She turned down the bed and said:

"Now you see he isn't here."

Then placing herself directly before me as I lay on the floor near one end of the bed, she drew up the curtain at the other end and said:

"You see he is not under there."

"No, he's not there," the soldier answered, thrown off his guard by the woman's willingness to permit him to examine the room.

Had he stooped and glanced even a foot further under the bed he must have seen some portion of my body, for I was just back in the shadows, though my head and shoulders were concealed by the woman who stood in front of me.

I held my revolver cocked, and several times had it pointed at the soldier.

She next took him to a wardrobe, which she opened and told him to examine. He did so, then to a closet, and out into other rooms, all of which the soldier searched to his intense satisfaction.

He came back through the room, and I, who was watching him from the darkness, beneath the bed, through a rent the curtain, saw him pause.

Instantly my revolver was pointed at his breast. He turned about, scrutinized my strange hiding-place closely, and took a step or two towards it.

My heart seemed to stand still. My finger was on the trigger, and every second I thought I should be compelled to pull the trigger and kill him.

A touch of my finger would have sent the soldier to eternity. Another step nearer, and he would have got a bullet square between his eyes. But his good fate, or good angel, or something, intervened to save him.

Just as he was raising his foot to make the step which would have ended his life, he seemed to change his mind, and turning about, left the house.

That evening the woman who had saved my life came to me and told me the soldiers were gone.

I waited until night, and then thanking her for the kindness she had done, crept out of the town into the woods and traveled all night. The next day I slept in a cavern on the Missouri River, and at night resumed my journey.



At daylight I came up to Quantrell's camp, and there found Fletch Taylor ahead of me.

We both considered our escapes remarkable, and were willing to take a few days rest before venturing to take the saddle again.

Mr. James now began to show some signs of weariness. He yawned and I excused myself, promising to call next morning.

#### IV.

##### CAPTURED BY A DETECTIVE.

"WERE you ever a prisoner, Mr. James—after the war and before your surrender to Governor Crittenden?"

"Never but once," he answered, taking a fresh chew of tobacco which was always the prelude to a story. "I was never a prisoner but once, and that but a few minutes."

"When and where was it?"

It has been several years ago, and was at the house of a friend of mine in Kentucky. A few days after the Russellville bank robbery, which strange and unaccountable as it may seem I was accused of participating in, I was stopping at the house of a friend in Western Kentucky.

I knew that detectives were scouring the whole country, and that I was sought after by a great many persons who were not particularly friendly toward me.

Jesse James, my brother, with Clell Miller, and the younger boys, had left me a few days before to go to Missouri, and there seek the quiet seclusion of our friends' homes. We had friends there, and have yet. Such men as General Joe Shelby, Major John N. Edwards, and Senator George Vest, never go back on a friend who fought with them during the war. I don't care what their faults may be, or of what they may be accused.

I was at the house of my friend, and he had gone out. Being weary and sleepy from having ridden all night, I went into the back room and laid down on a lounge, where I soon fell asleep.

Before going in I told the farmer's wife to keep a sharp look-out, and if she saw any stranger or strangers approaching the house to awaken me at once. I made it a rule in those days never to run any risk, but I was worn out by long, exciting rides, and one or two sharp fights in the mountains.

I had been asleep but a few moments, it seems, when a peddler came to the house. If anything will drive a country woman crazy, it's one of these confounded peddlers. The farmer's wife saw him enter the gate, and began to smile almost at the very moment she beheld him, I have no doubt.

The children were either at school or playing out-doors, for the day was very fine. The peddler entered with his large pack, and told my friend's wife he would like to show her some very excellent bargains he had in silks, muslins, and other goods.

Although she protested she had no money to buy, he told her he only wanted to show them to her, and what woman that ever lived refused to look at calicoes, worsted, and silk goods?

He opened his pack, which contained so much that it almost set her crazy. He conversed in the habitual low tone of a vender of cheap wares, and she in a low tone for

fear of waking me. The peddler at last said he was thirsty, and asked her if she could get him a drink.

She said there was no fresh water in the house, but if he would wait she would go down to the spring and get a pitcher full for him.

He consented, of course, and she was hardly outside of the door before he began prowling about the house. He was so easy about it, and I so tired and exhausted, that he did not wake me. He noiselessly opened the door into my temporary bed-chamber and beheld me. The peddler, who, as you have doubtless surmised, was a detective in disguise, glanced keenly about and discovered me.

He stole quietly to my side, and no doubt saw the butts of my pistols peeping out from beneath my head. The detective was a large, powerful man, as agile as a cat, and reaching over, seized both my pistols at once and jerked me from the couch. Before I could realize what he was about, he hurled me to the floor, put his knee on my breast, and slapped a pair of bracelets on my wrists.

It is useless to say I was stunned and confused, and for a few moments lay upon the floor staring about me in stupefied amazement.

"You are my prisoner," said the detective, drawing his revolver, and presenting it uncomfortably close to my head.

"What am I arrested for?" I asked.

"For being Frank James, and assisting in robbing the Russellville Bank," said the detective.

"In the first place, sir, how do you know I am Frank James?"

"Oh, that I'll be good for. We can establish your identity, Frank, beyond a cavil of a doubt."

Just at this moment I would have given a considerable sum to have seen my brother Jesse enter the room. But Jesse was miles away on his horse, riding to Missouri.

My case indeed seemed hopeless. I tried the handcuffs, and saw that it was impossible for me to slip my hands out. The detective coolly possessed himself of my revolvers.

"I must give you credit, sir, of being a very bold man," I said.

"Why?" asked the detective, with a smile, for he was really a very pleasant man.

"To attempt to arrest Frank James alone."

"It was risky, I know, but I had a decided advantage of you, or I should never have made the attempt. Now, Frank, you shall be treated well while in my hands if you will be quiet."

I had by this time made up my mind not to be very long in his hands. Just how I was to escape I did not know. I was handcuffed, unarmed and powerless.

The detective had my weapons and there was no one there to aid me. Besides, he had clasped the handcuffs so tightly about my wrists that they were paining me considerably.

The woman came back with the water, and seeing the state of affairs set up the wildest sort of screaming, but the detective, partly by threats, and partly by coaxing, induced her to be quiet.

He said he was very hungry and wanted something to eat before we started for Russellville. I was given to un-



derstand that we must walk ten miles and then he had a conveyance for us.

The woman got him a piece of cold corn bread and a bowl of milk, and he sat down before the fire to eat it.

I chanced to glance at his pack of goods which was at my side, and laying by it was a heavy stick with which he had carried the pack across his shoulder.

Here surely was a weapon, which if I could get, I could use. The woman who had got me into this trouble was very shrewd, and seemed to read my thoughts. She kept talking to the detective, and for a moment, but no longer, engaged his attention.

That moment was fatal to him, however, for quick as lightning I seized the club with my manacled hands and brought it down upon his head with such force as to knock him senseless.

"Quick, Eliza," I cried to the farmer's wife the moment the detective fell, "take his pistols from him."

She did so in a moment, handing mine to me, which I held in my manacled hands, my fingers on the trigger.

"Now, Eliza, search him for the key to these infernal handcuffs," I said.

She did so, and found it. Unfastening the bracelets, she released me from captivity, and before the detective came to himself I had them on him.

We then conveyed him down to the cellar, and tied and gagged him.

I stayed in the woods until night for fear there might be more. Eliza's husband was very angry at his wife's carelessness.

That night I made arrangements and left for Missouri, where the others had gone.

"What became of the detective?" I asked.

Why, a few weeks after I read an account of his body being found in an old well at a deserted farm-house, but, Mr. Stevens, there are some points on which you must not quiz me too closely. I feel tired, now, if you will excuse me awhile I believe I will lie down.

I went out of the jail with a slight feeling of horror at the coolness with which Frank James could relate such terrible adventures.

## V.

### ROBBING A DETECTIVE.

"MR. JAMES, I presume you have had a great many adventures with detectives," I said, on entering his cell again, and laying my fountain pen and manuscript pads down on the small stand-table.

Yes, sir, he answered, a great many, and if you have a mind to listen I would just as soon tell you as not of an adventure with one which amused me not a little.

My brother Jesse and I were in Clay county, and intended to go to St. Louis to attend the fair. Jesse, who, as all the world knows, was one of the most reckless men that ever lived, said he was going to run his famous black horse Jim Malone, which sometimes was called Siroc, by himself.

Jess went under the name of Howard, and I Woodson. We both had friends all over the country, and had been to St. Louis several times. Jess once actually applied for a position on the police force. You seem to smile, sir, but that man's audacity was unbounded.

But for the present I will only tell you of myself and this detective. When we were nearly ready to start, we became aware of the fact that a detective was on our track.

You might ask how we knew. We found it out from a hundred little circumstances, trivial in themselves, but all leading to one conclusion.

A friend of ours told us of a strange man in the neighborhood who was looking for work as a farm-hand.

Another had seen the same man at Kearney, and had learned he had inquired for Dr. Samuel's house, the home of our mother.

He was a green detective, of this we were certain, and so it afterwards proved. He was a fellow trying to work up a reputation by capturing the James Boys.

Doubtless his ambition was to be on the Pinkerton force, but he never got there.

Jesse at this time received information from our mysterious friend and messenger, Ike, to meet Jim Cummins in Tennessee, and started, while I determined to know who this detective really was.

I found he was called Joe Smith, and had come from the northeastern part of Missouri somewhere. The poor fool had blundered so far as to tell one or two of our most intimate friends his business, and showed them the small silver star on the lapel of his coat.

He was not dangerous; of that I soon became convinced, and one evening, just at dusk, met him trudging on foot along the road, not more than a mile from my mother's house.

"Helloa," said I, "where are you going, my friend?"

"Huntin' work," he said, with a silly grin, which belied his words.

"Work," said I, "there must be plenty of work in the neighborhood."

"Well, not such as I want," and he smiled foolishly.

"What kind of special work do you want?"

Again he laughed, and shook his head in a knowing manner.

"It's a secret. I'm mum. I know what I am about."

"Well, won't you tell me what you are about?"

"We fellows don't tell what we know, or what we are doing."

"What kind of fellows are you fellows?"

He pulled aside the lapel of his coat and revealed the small silver star, saying:

"Do you know what that means?" he asked, shaking his head knowingly.

"No."

"You must be green," said the amateur detective, who was really the greenest man I ever saw professing to be a detective.

It seemed so much glory for him to reveal his supposed office as detective that he could not keep it secret.

"I am green," I said, "what is it?"

"A star, a silver star! Don't you know what it means?"

"No; but I want to."

"Can you keep a secret?"

"Yes."

"Well, I'll tell you."



"Do, please."

"I am a detective," he whispered, confidentially, stooping over to listen to him.

"Is that so?"

"It is."

"Who are you trying to capture?"

"Can't you guess?"

"No."

"Well, we don't generally tell people what we are about, but I don't mind telling you. I am trying to capture the James Boys."

"Are you armed?"

Again he smiled that idiotic smile intended to be knowing, and produced a revolver.

"Do you see this?" he said.

"Is it a good one?"

"Yes."

"Will it miss fire?"

"No."

"Let me see it."

He was silly enough to hand me the pistol to look at. I cocked it.

"It won't miss fire?" said I.

"No."

"Well, stand off there a few steps and let me shoot you through the head," said I, leveling it at him.

"What for?" he cried, growing deathly white.

"For an infernal fool."

"Oh, don't! don't point it this way—it might go off."

"Stand still, for if you run I will fire."

"Oh—oh! who are you?"

"I am Frank James!"

"No—no; you are joking."

"I can convince you by serving you as Wicker was served."

It was really amusing to see the fool dance and howl, and beg for mercy. He went down on his knees and begged me to let him go.

A spirit of mischief seemed to possess me, and I continued to torment him for some time.

Had he not been so outrageously silly I believe I should have killed him then and there.

"Oh, spare me! spare me!" he cried. "I have a wife and children at home. Oh, don't kill me!"

"What have you here?" I asked.

"Eh, what?" he shouted, looking very hopeful.

"What have you here? Have you any money?"

"Only a little—just a little to take me home. I didn't intend to capture the James Boys; I was just in fun about that."

"I don't care whether you was in fun or not, give me that watch in your pocket."

He howled and begged for the watch, but I made him hand it up. It was only a cheap affair of German silver.

Then I made him give me all the money he had, turning his pockets wrong side out. He had twenty-three dollars and forty-five cents, which I sent home to his wife in a registered letter. He gave up a silver ring, which was all his jewelry.

"Now, you run down that road," said I to the frighten-

ed fellow; "run just as fast as you can, and I will count ten, and then shoot you if you are in sight."

I began to count, but I never in all my life saw a pair of long legs get over ground more rapidly. He almost flew, and was out of sight long before I had counted ten.

I almost laughed myself sick, threw the watch and cheap jewelry away, and disposed of the money as I have said, and kept the revolver until I got a chance to trade it off.

You must excuse me for the rest of the day, Mr. Stevens, for I am not feeling well, besides I have some letters to write.

So I left his cell.

## VI.

### STORY OF THE OAK.

MY narrow escapes from officers of the law, said Frank James, have been many, but I think about as close a run as I ever made was some time in the year of 1875 or '76. It was a few months after Pinkerton's gang attacked the house of my step-father, and killed my brother Arthur, and tore off my mother's arm with the hand grenade.

I was in the neighborhood of Liberty, Missouri, at the house of a friend, where I had been staying some time.

I was in the parlor of the country-house, which was darkened by the blinds being closed, and curtains.

I had been playing with a little girl about four years old. We were romping about over the floor. I on my hands and knees as her horse, and she on my back part of the time, and leading me a part of the time, when her father entered the room hurriedly and said:

"Frank."

"What?" I asked starting up, and seeing my friend was almost breathless with excitement. I became not a little alarmed.

"There are a lot of men coming here!"

"Where?"

"Down the lane."

"Are they coming to the house?" I asked taking my belt with pistols off the piano and buckling it under my coat.

"I'm afraid so."

I crept to the window, which was partly open, and took a peep down the lane.

There were six or eight suspicious-looking horsemen coming along the lane. They had descended to the ravine and were now ascending on the other side.

By the way, they quickened the steps of their horses, and kept up a nervous, glancing around, I was suspicious of them.

I glanced out at the rear window. There was the yard to cross, and then a small orchard.

If I should escape that way they would certainly see me, and it was the only way by which I could possibly escape.

"They have halted. Frank," said my friend.

"All together?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"At the front gate."

"Then I must go, Jim. Good-bye."

I had lifted the window at the rear parlor, and leaped out upon the ground.

My friend was trembling, and white as a sheet.



I had scarcely touched the ground, before there came a knocking at the front door.

There were one or two of those horsemen whom I recognized as belonging to Pinkerton's force, and I had good reason to believe they were all his men.

I ran lightly to the garden gate, which I reached undiscovered, but just as I passed through, one of the detectives who had ridden up the side of the fence, a short distance, called out:

"Halt!"

Of course this only increased my speed.

"Crack!" sharp and keen rang out the report of a pistol in my rear.

The bullet struck the top of one of the palings, split off a small piece, and hummed close to my ear.

I ran about as fast as I ever ran in my life.

There came loud shouts in my rear.

A part of the detectives were galloping around the fence, and some were coming through the front yard.

"Crack!"

"Crack!"

"Crack!" came three shots. The bullets whistled harmlessly over my head as I flew along the garden walk, and I saw a white speck on the bark of a cherry tree directly in front of me where one of the bullets had struck.

I sprang over the garden wall into the orchard, which the horses of the detectives refused to do.

They continued to yell to me to halt, and fire at me.

One of their bullets passed through the sleeve of my coat, and just grazed the skin.

It burnt me so severely that at first I thought I was badly hurt.

A single movement of my arm, however, convinced me that no bones were broken, and I did not for a moment slacken my speed.

Those who were trying to ride round the field had a long way to go to head me off, and I sped with almost the speed of a race-horse through the orchard.

Those in my rear could not get their horses over the garden fence until they tore it down, which occasioned delay enough for me to cross the orchard, which was about an eighth of a mile in width.

I leaped the rail fence at the back of the orchard just as they entered the other side, and ran off into the woods.

The clatter of hoofs, now from both ways, told me that my enemies were close on my heels, and I knew I must soon find some safe hiding-place.

I had gone about a quarter of a mile through the woods, when I saw before me a large oak tree, with branches very thick and covered with leaves.

This seemed to furnish me the only safe retreat.

I reached it, and climbed up into its thick branches.

A little above the first bough I ensconced myself, and listened to the sound of my pursuers.

"We'll have him now," said one. "He can't long keep out of our way, unless there should be another infernal fence for us to tear down."

"He can make good use of them long legs of his," said another.

"It was Frank James, I know," said the first speaker.

I cocked my pistol and resolved to await the issue.

They came up pell-mell to the old oak which had offered me shelter, and to my horror came to a halt.

"I wonder where he is?" said one.

"He certainly can't be far," said another.

"He's close by."

"He's a good shot, too," added the first speaker.

"Well, I'll let him have a shot at me if he will condescend to give me the first shot."

They sat there on their horses, while I kept my pistol cocked, ready to die fighting before I would be captured.

I could see them plainly through a very small space between the leaves, while I, who lay so close to the dark trunk, was comparatively concealed.

Occasionally they cast upward glances, as if they half-suspected that I was there.

But they did not see me, I don't think, yet somehow they had strong suspicions in regard to the old oak tree.

They all finally rode away save one man, and he still sat on his horse evidently on guard.

I waited until the others were well out of hearing, and then resolved on a desperate plan.

I suddenly let myself fall from the tree behind the detective on his horse, striking the rider a blow with the butt of my pistol, which felled him like a log to the ground.

The next minute I was in the saddle, and sped away like the wind to the house of my friend.

My own horse was brought out of the stable, I mounted him and galloped off, never seeing anything more of the detectives.

"I think, Mr. Stevens, my story of the oak will be sufficient for this forenoon," said Frank James. "Call again this evening."

## VII.

### JESSE'S MAD RIDE.

"YOUR brother Jesse is said to have been a very brave man, Mr. James," said I, when next I found myself in the cell of the outlaw.

"He was the gamest man I ever say," said Frank, with some degree of pride. "Whatever may be said of my own personal prowess and courage, I have always acknowledged him my superior in both."

"It may be that I possessed more caution than Jesse, for at times he was really reckless."

As a preliminary to a story, Mr. James took a fresh chew of tobacco, and for a few moments chewed it quite vigorously.

"Can you not give me some account of Jesse's adventures?" I asked.

Oh, yes, sir; I know of many of them myself, for they came directly under my own personal observation, and many others have been told me by various parties, and sometimes charily related by Jess, for he never liked to tell of his own adventures, for fear it might have a semblance of boasting.

It was on that unfortunate Northfield, Minnesota, affair, that I saw Jesse's nerve tried in a way that men's courage is seldom tried.

I was wounded in the leg, as you will remember, and we two separated from the others.

I was so lame I could scarcely stand, and after we had



run down we traveled on foot, I scarcely able to crawl, through the woods.

From a point of headland, we observed the fight made by Cole Younger, his brothers and Clell Miller. The flash and smoke of their guns and pistols could be plainly seen from our place of observation.

That was as gallant a fight as one ever saw. Bob Younger's jaw was shattered by a bullet before they went into the thicket, and there they fought for hours.

Fought until Clell Miller was dead and all the others down except Cole Younger, who was wounded in half a dozen places when he surrendered. Cole was a brave man—brave as a lion—but he lacked discretion.

Had they gone the route we urged upon them, they might have got away, but Cole was stubborn, with all his bravery.

"It's all over," said Jess, when he discovered that Cole had surrendered. "It's all over, and our boys are gone up."

Jesse was a man who could bear up under a great deal, but there were tears in his eyes as he spoke.

He cursed Bill Chadwell for bringing us on such an expedition.

Had we been in Missouri, Kentucky, or Tennessee, we could have found plenty of friends who would willingly have taken us in and given us shelter and aid, but in this cold, friendless North, where we would be regarded as only the most desperate of men we could find no pitying eye, no friendly hand to help.

I crawled and walked for two days. Jesse carried me a good part of the time.

The newspapers were of course full of our exploits, and this proved our salvation.

Our mysterious friend "Ike," read an account of the failure, fight, and flight at Northfield, Minnesota, and also of the fact that Jesse and Frank James had escaped and were on foot making their way toward the great southwest.

The faithful fellow at once set out to meet us with fresh horses. With either a wonderful instinct, or by the most remarkable calculation of which I ever heard, he met us one moonlit night upon a great prairie.

We were worn and exhausted and almost starved.

The saddle pockets of his saddle were full of provisions, and two bottles of choice old madeira. He also brought with him pistols and ammunition.

We had been chased, ran, and fought so long that we were almost on the point of facing our pursuers and dying on the spot when Ike found us.

In an hour we were like fresh men, and mounting the horses we galloped along gayly in the moonlight. The Mysterious Ike disappeared out on the vast prairie, and we galloped away as fast as we could.

We passed a small village, and had hardly got beyond it before we were pursued and chased several miles.

My wound now became so painful that I could scarcely ride.

The next day we stopped at an old deserted house and rested for some time. Feeling much refreshed we resumed our flight in the afternoon.

Jesse and I were now aware of the fact that our enemies had been aroused in our front or had gone around us.

We had to cross a creek called Wolf's Creek, and there was but one ford within ten miles.

The banks were lined with forest trees, and the road seemed just to slope down to the bed of the creek at that one place on both sides.

"Jess," said I, "suppose we reconnoiter that ford before we make an attempt to cross it."

"It's a good idea, Frank," he answered; "and up here on this hill is an excellent place of observation. We will climb up there and see what we can see."

We rode up on a wooded hill which overlooked the creek ford, and there we halted while Jesse climbed a tree to get a better view.

From the banks of the creek, smoke from camp-fires could be seen ascending.

Jesse came quickly down from his post of observation and said:

"Frank, they are guarding the ford."

"Is that so?"

"Yes."

"Well, what shall we do?"

"We dare not turn back?"

"No," said I.

"Nor can we go round."

"We would be overtaken before we could do so, and my leg pains me so I cannot ride rapidly."

"We dare not remain here?"

"Not long."

"Our pursuers in our rear will be here soon."

"Yes, Jess, our case is a desperate one."

"There is but one thing to do?"

"What?"

"Dash right through."

"I could not stand that, Jess."

He studied a moment and said:

"I have it now."

"Well, what is it, Jess?"

"I will dash through there myself, draw pursuit, and you follow after."

"Oh, Jess, what a mad ride it will be."

"I know, but it's our only chance."

He was determined, and much as I regretted to see him make the wild ride through the camp of armed enemies he prepared to do it.

"Stay here until you see them all after me," said Jesse, "then ride across the ford and meet me at the round grove twenty miles south."

I consented.

Wheeling his horse about, he returned to the road.

The sun had just gone down, and it was growing dusk.

Jesse reached the road, and taking the rein in his teeth and a revolver in each hand, dashed spurs to his horse and galloped down toward the camp of the pursuers.

"Halt!" cried a voice.

"Crack!" came a shot.

"Crack!"

"Crack!"

"Crack!" others from different directions, and so near together that it seemed difficult to tell the number.



The wild clatter of Jesse's horse's hoofs rang out on the evening air, and high above the shouts and cries and ringing shots of his enemies, I heard the voice of my beloved brother yell in defiance:

*"I am Jesse James; kill me if you can!"*

He was enduring all this for me, I very well knew, and oh! how I wished him safe across that ford.

It seemed miles through that camp, and his thundering steed seemed an age in reaching it.

From along the road-side and woods spirits of white smoke and cracks of rifles rang out on the air.

"Oh! will he never get through?" I mentally exclaimed.

But now I could see his proud defiant form ascending the creek bank on the other side. Gallant rider and gallant steed, untouched by the hundred bullets which had been hurtled about them!

I saw him wave his revolvers defiantly as he galloped away.

Soon there was mounting in hot haste, and the whole gang were in pursuit. And soon they had passed over the hill out of sight.

I was now riding out into the road, and soon reached the deserted camp.

There, lying at the road-side, was a pale, ghastly form, and a little further on was a man expiring in the most intense agony. I knew my brother's bullets had not all been wasted. I crossed the ford, and at the appointed place met my brother, and we continued our way to Allen Palmer's, our brother-in-law in Texas.

"It's about my hour for lunch," said Frank James, looking at his watch; and I took the hint and left, telling him I would return in two or three hours.

### VIII.

#### AT NORTHFIELD.

"Your Northfield expedition, Mr. James, was your worst failure, was it not?" I asked, when again I found myself in his cell.

"Yes, sir, the flatest failure our once gallant band ever met with."

"Have you any objection to tell me about it?"

No, for I suppose they will never let me get away from Missouri to be tried up there, and I don't care if I do tell you.

Bill Chadwell, a brave but reckless fellow, was the cause of our going there. Poor fellow, he paid for the expedition with his life.

We were Bob, Cole and Jim Younger, Clell Miller, Bill Chadwell, Jess and myself.

We regarded ourselves as the seven invincibles. We thought we were equal to a small army, especially as we carried a small arsenal of pistols about us.

Bill Chadwell had formerly lived in Northfield, and he was sure we could make a rich haul, he said, by going there.

Bob Younger was in California at the time, and had settled down to a quiet life. Cole Younger wrote for him to come to Missouri.

Bob did so, and Cole then told him what we had planned to do. Bob, who had really retired from the business which had proven so dangerous, really wanted to be ex-

cused, but Cole assured him that there could not be much danger with seven such determined men as we were.

He reasoned that we could all make a fortune at one haul and retire.

Well, at last Bob very reluctantly consented, and we set out for Minnesota from Missouri.

But two out of the seven were never destined to return.

I am sorry to this day that we went.

We used all due caution, even entering the town from different points, in three different parties.

But something about us had in some way created suspicion.

Cole Younger had been there a day or two ahead of us, and had been courting a girl. He pretended to be some kind of a millionaire and had laid out the work.

We all met in front of the bank, and Jess and Cole began talking horse trade. Bob, Jim and I held the horses, while they and Clell Miller went in to get a twenty-dollar bill changed.

Shouts and cries and oaths from within soon convinced us that work had begun.

The infernal safe was shut, and they could not get it open.

The alarm spread over town. We who were on our horses drew our revolvers, and commenced firing right and left.

But it seemed to me as if the town was armed, and in ambush to receive us.

"Crack, crack, crack!" right and left, before and behind, rang out shots, and bullets whistled like hail about our heads.

A hundred men were armed, it seemed, and pouring in a deadly fire upon us.

Bob Younger's horse was killed, and then Bill Chadwell fell dead from the saddle, killed by a shot from an army rifle.

I galloped up to the bank door, and cried:

"Jess, Jess, why don't you come on?"

"We can't get the safe open," Jess answered.

"We are betrayed."

"Crack!" went a pistol inside, and I heard Jesse cry:

"There, Clell, you fool, you have killed him, and no one of us knows the combination and can open the safe."

I knew then that the shot had killed the cashier.

"Come on," I shouted, "there is an army out here, and we can't keep them away much longer."

"We are coming. Can't you four drive them back?"

"Bill Chadwell is dead."

They came out, and Jess, who was furious at our failure, shot a man through the head who was looking out of an outside cellar-door about a hundred yards away.

We were in a bad enough fix now.

Bob Younger's jaw was broken by a bullet and Jim had a wound in the arm.

Cole Younger, Jess and Clell Miller were a host in themselves, and fired a perfect storm of lead down the street, which cleared it, and mounting our horses, away we galloped.

"Jess, did you get anything?" I said.

"No."

"They must have been warned."



"It's all Cole's foolishness in courting that girl," Jess whispered; "he gave the thing away."

There was a coolness between Jess and Cole Younger after that, and they were never good friends any more up to the time we separated.

We have never seen each other since, for Clell Miller, as you know, was killed, and the Younger boys captured and sent to the penitentiary, where they now are.

## IX.

### IN A MURDERER'S DEN.

"IN all your adventures, Mr. James, did you ever meet with any other outlaws or robbers with whom you had no connection?" I asked, after Mr. James had taken a few moments' rest and a fresh chew of tobacco.

Yes, sir, he answered. I do not think I can amuse you better than to give you an account of a most singular adventure my brother Jesse and I had one night in Arkansas.

I do not know the exact locality we were in, but it was near the mountainous part, and a wild and unsettled portion of the world it was.

Jessie and I had been lost, to admit the truth, and had wandered about all day, when we came to a large log-house on the banks of a creek. The road which led past it did not seem to have been traveled very much.

The house was larger than they generally were in this locality.

We rode up and halloaed.

An old woman with a dirty night-cap on her head, and a hairy mole on her chin came out.

"Can we stay all night?" I asked.

"Wall, I reckon so," she answered. "My ole man and boy are gone, but they'll be hum to-night."

"We are very tired, and our horses almost given out, we cannot go much further."

She showed us where to put our horses, and feed for them.

After we had groomed our horses, for we invariably made this our duty, we went into the house.

There we found the old woman and a shock-headed boy.

I was not very well impressed with the old hag from the first, for she seemed to eye the rich watch-chains we wore and the diamond ring on Jesse's finger.

She prepared supper, and we ate heartily, and were then shown to our room.

While we sat talking, we heard two men enter the house, and for a few moments there was some conversation going on.

Then the shock-headed boy came up-stairs with a bowl of punch for us, which he said the missis hoped we'd drink as we were tired.

That puzzled us both.

"There's something queer about this, Jess," I said, as soon as the boy was gone.

"Yes; they are very clever."

"I don't think everything is right," said I, tasting the punch.

"Why?"

"This stuff is drugged."

"Are you sure?"

"I believe it strong enough not to touch it. We are neither of us so fond of liquor that we cannot throw this out and pretend that we have drank it all."

"That's so," said Jess.

"Let's do it."

"Agreed."

"Then feign sleep."

We poured out the liquor, and each got on a bed, where we soon pretended to be asleep.

A few moments after I heard a creak on the stairway, and the door of our apartment opened.

I was lying so I could have a good view of the door, and as it opened, I don't think I ever saw a more villainous-looking head and face peer in the room in all my life.

The hair was black, long and matted. It seemed to me as if the head had never been combed.

The head was large, eyes black and piercing, and chin heavy.

The beard was black all over the face, long and matted.

As he grinned with delight on seeing us asleep, as he supposed, his white teeth gleamed as I suppose the teeth of a shark must when he is about to capture a victim.

The head withdrew, and I rose noiselessly and crept to the door of the stairway.

"It's all right, Diggory," I heard the man say to some one below. "They're just sleepin' like babies."

"I fixed 'em—he, he, he. I knowed I'd fix 'em. I allus do," the old woman chuckled most fiendishly.

I felt as if I could wring her old neck with most excellent grace.

"The punch did it, mother," said the man who had looked in.

"Yes, yer bet it did—he, he, he; it allus does—it allus does."

"There warn't any need o' it," growled another voice.

"Why, Diggory?"

"I could a-shot 'em with the old double-barreled gun jest as well as not, and this war all nonsense."

"Wall, now, Diggory, it ain't so safe."

"Yes, it is."

"No, it ain't."

"I tell ye it is."

"Well, now, don't ye believe that yer father knows more about this than you do?"

"Ye must allus be a-druggin' and a-druggin', when I'd ruther knock a man on the head awake than when he's asleep. I jest bet that they ain't got enough money to pay fur the druggin'."

"Oh, yes they hez, yes they hez," the old woman cried. "They've jest got any amount, and piles o' it. I seed their heavy watch-chains, and saw them watches. They're gold, Diggory, d'ye hear that? pure gold, an' ye kin jest hear their money clink as they walk along."

There was a chuckling, which to me was fiendish.

I ascertained now that we were to be murdered in cold blood.

"Well," growled Diggory, "let's git this 'erc little job over with."

"Old ooman, get the whetstone," said the man, "we



must sharpen up these knives. They're hardly fit fur butcherin'."

I could not repress a shudder as I crept back.

Jesse was awake, and I hurriedly told him what they were doing.

We lit our bit of tallow candle, and set a large box over it; then lay down in the beds, each holding a pistol ready cocked.

We concluded it our duty to society to rid it of two such villains as these, and perhaps this might atone for some of our own small faults.

In a few moments we heard a creaking on the stairway, and the door was softly opened.

"Come on, Diggory, and hold up the light," the man whispered.

"There's no need in all this," growled Diggory.

"Yes, there is. Come on, and quit your grumbling."

I could now see that they carried a thief's lantern with them, and were ready to shut the slide on at any moment.

They came stealthily into the room, and closed the door.

"They're asleep," said the old villain. "That's nice. Now, Diggory, you take that 'un an' give me this."

They advanced a step or two, when I kicked the box from off the burning candle, and Jesse sprang to the door.

"Hold on!" we cried, and I leveled a pistol at the old man, and Jess at the blood-thirsty youngster.

"Oh, mercy, mercy, don't, gentlemen!" the old scoundrel gasped. "We wur jest comin' up to see ef ye wur comfortable!"

"Then what did you want with those knives?" Jess asked.

"Oh, don't, don't!"

"Down on your knees," cried Jess.

"Don't, don't!"

"Kneel, I say!"

Down they went.

"Faces this way!"

I had now got off the bed and was standing by Jesse's side.

"What are ye gwine to do?" the old murderer asked.

"Kill you! blow your brains out of your heads!"

"Oh, dear! oh, dear! don't, don't! We only looked to your happiness."

"Are you ready, Frank?" Jess asked.

"Yes."

"You take the old man, and I Diggory."

"All right."

"Oh, please spare us! oh, don't!"

"One," said Jesse.

"Oh, don't!"

"Two."

"Don't—don't!"

"Threc."

"Bang!"

"Bang!"

With wild screams they fell on the floor dead.

Jesse set the house on fire, and kicked the old woman down-stairs; as she came up we mounted our horses and left. We had many other adventures, but none that were more thrilling than that in the murderer's den.

But I am tired and wish to rest. Mr. Stevens, excuse me until to-morrow morning, please.

I did so of course.

## X.

### FRANK AS A CORPSE.

PERHAPS the most singular, if not the most thrilling adventure, of my life, said Mr. Frank James, occurred in Kentucky.

I had been at Louisville when Pinkerton's men got to smelling about there.

I must give them credit for considerable shrewdness and boldness. But I could always tell whenever a detective was on my trail. We had friends who invariably posted us of the fact.

I left Louisville and went to a small town, the name of which I do not care to have made public, for private reasons, nor do I wish the names of those true friends there made known. We will call them Smith for convenience, and my main friend, John Smith.

I was staying at John Smith's house then, which, by the way, was no mean house. John Smith was wealthy, but, having been in the Confederate army under Quantrell, and a Missourian, never went back on a friend.

I passed for Smith's cousin, and came to his house on a visit.

The third day after my visit to Smith's he entered the parlor, where I was learning a new tune at the piano, for I am something of a musician.

"Well, John," said I, "what is it?" for I saw something was the matter.

"Frank, you have been tracked," he answered.

"By the detective?" I asked, starting up and drawing a pistol.

"Yes, he answered; "but put that up; they are playing it sly."

"Where are they, and how many?"

"They are scattered about town, and so many that you cannot cut your way through. I think you need have no fear about their raiding the house. They are shadowing it. I saw two big, stout fellows just across the corner, and there were suspicious inquiries made at Tom Hogan's saloon."

"Well, this is a pretty fix, John."

"Yes."

"I must get away."

"I don't see how."

"You say there is no immediate danger of an attack on the house."

"No, I think not."

"Then I have the plan."

"What is it?"

"I must die."

He looked horrified, but I explained it all, and asked him if he knew a doctor who could be trusted.

He did—the very man was an old friend of mine, and entered into the scheme with great earnestness.

That evening I fell very sick. The news went out that Mr. Smith's relative was dangerously ill.

The doctor came and was closeted with me while we smoked cigars, talked on the principal characters in



Shakespeare, discussed the merits of Barrett, Booth, and Joe Jefferson, as actors, and then went away with his hand-case of medicines, looking very grave.

For the next two days he came there three or four times a day, and always looked very grave, and shook his head doubtfully when the neighbors asked how Mr. Smith's friend was. But few had seen me, and none dreamed who I was.

The detectives pumped the doctor when they would meet him, but he gave a very different description between myself and Frank James.

I was shaven smooth, and my appearance altered as much as possible. Of course I was so ill that no visitors could be admitted under any circumstances. The detectives were puzzled, as I could see by watching them from the slightly parted blinds.

On the third night I died, and the next morning black crape was put on the door. A coffin was procured, and I, dressed out in grave clothes and my face whitened, until the pallor of death seemed natural.

I was laid in the coffin, the lid screwed down, but so arranged as to give me a meager ventilation.

None but Smith and his wife were in the secret, and so well did they play their parts that the children wept and wailed over my dead body tears that were real. There was a glass over the coffin just above my face, and many of the curious came to look at me.

I was to be put on the train and sent to my home. The matter was explained by a letter to my cousin, Wood Hite, who then was not so well known a man, and he was to meet the body at the station, one hundred miles away, and carry it in a spring wagon away to be buried.

That morning a detective accosted Mr. Smith, and told him they must search his house.

"What for?" he asked.

"We know that Frank James is there," said the detective.

"Sir, don't you know I have had a death in my house?"

"We can't help that," persisted the detective. "We must search it."

"Search it to your heart's content," said Mr. Smith; "but please don't disturb my afflicted family more than you can help."

Two detectives went through the house, thoroughly searching it, and at Mr. Smith's request came to look at the corpse.

I could hear them talking to each other as they stood looking through the glass of the coffin on my pale face, but I never moved a muscle.

It seemed an age that they stood there gazing on me, and I can assure you that it was very trying, even on my nerves, which were well-seasoned in such experiences.

They conversed in low tones, respectful for the dead, inquired where the young man had lived, and if he had a mother.

"No, he has no relatives except a brother, to whom he is to be taken on the train. I am going myself with the body, gentlemen, in an hour, and want you to be so thoroughly satisfied that Frank James is not in my house that my family will not be disturbed during my absence."

The detectives again searched the house and premises,

and at last seemed satisfied I was not there, but were sure I was in the village somewhere.

They regretted disturbing Mr. Smith in such a solemn hour, and two of them helped carry the coffin to the hearse which conducted it to the depot.

I was put in the baggage car, and Mr. Smith got on the train. After a ride of a hundred miles I was taken off at a station where Wood Hite met me with a wagon. Then riding out in the country I got out of my coffin, which was buried, and went to the old man Hites, where I stayed several weeks, and then went to my mother's in Missouri. It's about my time for a nap, Mr. Stevens, so excuse me for the day.

I left him more than ever astounded at his shrewdness.

## XI.

### IN A PEDDLER'S PACK.

FRANK JAMES' last story had made such an impression on me that I dreamed of it nearly all night. I could almost see his pale, still form in the coffin and the detectives watching for him.

The next morning I was early at his cell, and found the noted bandit in very good humor and quite talkative.

One of his attorneys, who was to defend him in his forthcoming trial, had been to see him, and gave him the most encouraging news. The community were in his favor; even great statesmen, through the person of General Joe Shelby, were to come to his aid.

"Your adventure as a corpse was certainly a singular one, Mr. James," said I.

Well, yes, rather a neat way of avoiding a detective, he answered, with a smile. But the detectives sometimes get up devices quite as shrewd as mine was.

The most singular one I ever knew was at the house of a friend in Clay County, Missouri. Detectives who had been hounding me for years had been baffled, and two of Allen Pinkerton's men, it seemed, had determined on one more trial.

My wife Annie had been at this house of my friend for some time, and I went there to see her.

The detectives had by some means found out she was there, and were, without a doubt, shadowing the house when I came.

I took every precaution I could before venturing near the house, and was quite sure I had entered unobserved, as I had done so under the disguise of a woman.

That very evening, as I was watching the sunset, a peddler with a large pack on his back came up the road. I saw him for some distance before he came to the house, and scrutinized him closely.

He walked slowly, and seemed just like a weary old peddler. He stopped at the gate and asked to stay all night.

The owner of the house, who had met him there, said:

"Sir, it is impossible for me to keep you."

"Well, me friend," said the Irish peddler, "to be sure I thraveled a divil av a long road to-day, and had such bad luck that it sames tratin' a man bad indade to refuse him a night's shelter."

"A mile further on, my friend, I am quite certain you can find accommodation," said the farmer.

"A mile beyant! And bedad it's been a mile beyant—



a mile beyant—for the last hour or two, and d'ye think it's aisy carryin' me heavy pack fur a mile beyant?"

"I am sure it is not."

"And hev ye no marcy fur sufferin' humanity?"

"I would accommodate you if I could."

"Oh, bedad! that's jist the way wid all av 'em; they wad all accommodate me ef they could!"

"But, sir, I cannot."

"Couldn't ye let me slape in the barran?"

"There's no hay there."

"To be sure there's the flure."

"But I cannot, sir; it's impossible."

"Indade, this is a very hard-hearted world, indade, sir, it is."

"I am sorry."

"But ye sae it don't help me carry me heavy pack fur another mile."

"I know, my friend, but still I cannot help it."

"If ye can't let me sthay over night wid ye, would ye be kind enough to let me lave me pack. I kin come back in the mornin' an' get it."

"Well, we can certainly find a place for your pack, my friend," said the farmer. "Bring it in the hall, and lay it down upon the floor."

The peddler did so and went away, grumbling at the hard-hearted people who would make a wearied wayfarer walk another mile.

The pack he had left in the hall was a very large one, and the farmer's boy who stood in the hall watching it, declared he saw it move.

"Oh, nonsense, Johnny, what got that in your head? You must be crazy," said the father.

"But, pa, I did, I know I did," said the excited boy.

"You are surely wild."

"No, I ain't."

"How could the old peddler's pack of goods move?"

"I dunno, pa, but it did, jest as sure as the world."

"It's your imagination," said the father.

I stood at the head of the stairway listening to the conversation, and was not a little impressed with it.

I beckoned Johnny to come up to my room, which he did.

"My boy," said I, "did you see the pack move?"

"Yes, sir."

"How came it to move?"

"I don't know."

"Did you kick it?"

"No."

"Were you making any noise in the hall at the time?"

"No, sir, I was just standin' in the hall a looking at the pack, and wonderin' what was in it, when all to onct it began to move just like some worm inside was a squirming about."

"Don't say anything more about it, Johnny," said I, "I want to talk with you about it after supper."

The boy went away, and night came on.

The farmer had fed his stock, and done up the night chores, and supper was announseed. We said nothing about the old peddler's pack, but having finished my supper I paused in the hall to look at it.

It was certainly a strange-looking pack.

It was larger than I had ever seen a peddler carry, and was almost square. This singular package could not belong to a peddler.

While I was studying about it Johnny came along and gave it a kick with his strong, brass-toed boot.

I was sure I saw a light movement and heard a suppressed groan.

I took the boy, and led him up to my room.

"Johnny," said I, "can you shoot a pistol?"

"Yes," he answered.

"A real pistol?"

"You bet."

I took one from my hip-pocket, a small Smith & Wesson revolver, and said: "Do you think you could shoot this?"

"Oh, yes," and his eyes sparkled with delight at the prospect of using fire-arms.

"Well, Johnny, I think it would be a very funny trick for you to take this pistol and shoot into the old peddler's pack."

The boy laughed and said it would.

"It won't hurt his goods much?" said Johnny.

"No; and if you will do it, I will pay all the damage that may be done them."

"Then give me the pistol," said Johnny.

The hall chandelier lighted up the hallway, and the peddler's pack could be plainly seen.

Johnny took the pistol and went directly up to the pack. When within about two feet of it he paused.

I was standing on the stairway watching him. He raised the pistol, and took a deliberate aim at the center.

"Crack!" rang out the pistol.

The peddler's pack gave a great flounce, and bounced, and jumped, and rolled over on the floor.

"Oh—oh—o—h—oh—o—h!" came out a voice from within. "Help! help! Mur—der! h—el—p!"

I never saw a boy more frightened. He evidently thought the pack bewitched. He screamed with fear and terror.

I bounded down into the hallway, where the alarmed farmer now was, and drawing my knife quickly cut open the pack.

A man rolled out of it. The bullet had grazed the side of his left knee, shattering the bone, and buried itself in his breast.

I knew in a moment that the wound was mortal. The man was already dying.

"Who are you?" I asked. "Speak quick, for your time is almost come."

"One of Pinkerton's detectives."

"What was your business here?"

"To capture Frank James."

"Your name?"

A deep groan burst from his lips, a shudder, and all was over. The fellow was dead.

The farmer was now frightened almost to death. I found in a pocket of the dead detective a small silver whistle. A dark lantern, handcuffs, and a brace of revolvers were also in the pack.

I felt that my escape had been a very narrow one indeed. The question which now presented itself was, what was to



be done? The dead detective in the farmer's house would get my friend into trouble.

We could not dispose of him without at the same time disposing of the other.

The other, that was the rub. How many more might there be? I consulted with the farmer and at last agreed upon the safest, which was yet the boldest plan.

At midnight I took my place at the door and blew three short, sharp calls on the detective's whistle.

They were answered, and I blew another—a longer one.

A few moments after a man crept from some haystacks and made his way toward the house.

"Have you found him, Enoch?" a voice asked in a whisper.

"Yes," I answered.

"All right?"

"Yes."

There was but one, which greatly relieved me, and I prepared myself for him.

He came to the door and I admitted him to the dark hallway.

As he entered I flashed the rays of the dark-lantern in his face, and the next moment struck him a blow with my pistol, which felled him to the floor.

We disposed of both those detectives, but I have always admired their pluck and ingenuity in getting up the plan of the man in the peddler's pack.

## XII.

### SAVED BY A DREAM.

"Do you believe in dreams, Mr. Stevens?" Frank James asked, after a few moments' silence between ending his last story and commencing a new one.

"Well, Mr. James, I am hardly prepared to say," I answered. "I have read of some remarkable dreams and fulfillments, and have had some dreams singularly fulfilled myself. Yet these may be coincidences."

"That's true, but coincidences can't always turn out the right way. I had a dream once which saved my life. I was never very superstitious, although Jesse did start the story on me once about seeing a ghost in Arkansas. The ghost only turned out to be a girl-somnambulist, but you have doubtless heard of it."

I told him that I had heard of the story, and had written it up in some of his adventures.

Well, that will not prove that I am superstitious at all, but I had a dream once which was singular and which I know was a warning to me.

I was at the time in Tennessee, and had been enjoying the longest respite I had ever had. In fact, I had really given up business, and determined to live a quiet, retired life under an assumed name.

I was on a farm a short distance from Nashville, and had been there for nearly two years.

One night I had retired about the same time as usual, was in good health, with nothing special on my mind.

I dreamt that I was at work in the field, hoeing corn, and had paused in the shade of an oak to rest.

That I saw gliding towards me through the thicket a dark object, which on nearer approach I discovered to be a panther. It was stealing upon me, and I powerless to move.

Nearer and nearer it came, until each gleaming fang became a deadly dagger, and its face assumed the form of a human.

Then came others, and I realized that it was a band of detectives.

"Now we have him surrounded," one seemed to say; "Frank James, you shall now atone in blood for your many misdeeds."

With that the detective seemed to spring upon me with uplifted dagger, and I awoke.

I regarded it as only a dream, and in a moment was asleep again.

The same scene in the same field seemed to recur to me once more. Again I felt that awful spell upon me that had possessed me before, a kind of a choking dread.

Just as the panthers creeping up turned to detectives, and their leader, using the same words as before, sprang on me, I again awoke.

I had heard it said that one's dreams are apt to be repeated if one awakes and does not turn over, so I turned over upon my other side, and in a moment was again buried in sleep.

Strange to say for the third time that singular dream was repeated, only far more vivid and full than ever before.

I awoke with a start, the cold perspiration standing out on my body, to find my wife sitting up in bed.

"What is the matter, Annie?" I asked.

"Oh, Frank, I have had such a frightful dream!"

"What was it, my dear?"

"I dreamt a great cat was stealing forward to catch our baby, and then it became a panther, and it was me it was after, and then it turned to a man, a detective, and sprang upon you, and there were others coming up to help him, and they were putting a rope round your neck when I awoke."

"Annie," said I, springing from the bed, "that is very strange, but it is still stranger that I have had a similar dream three times to-night myself."

"Oh, Frank——"

"What, dear?"

"I am afraid something is wrong."

"Pshaw, Annie, you don't believe anything in dreams, do you?" I asked, beginning to dress myself as rapidly as I could, for I had determined on exploring the premises any way.

"But it was so vivid."

"Dreams sometimes are."

"This was no ordinary dream."

"What was it, dear?"

"A vision—a warning."

"Well, if you think so, I will just take a peep outside."

"Wait. I'm going too."

"What do you mean, Annie?"

She had already arisen and was dressing herself very rapidly.

"This is nonsense, darling."

"But, Frank, if there is danger threatening you, I intend to see what it is."

"But there is not, my dear."

"Oh, I know there must be."



I had buckled on my revolvers, and was quite ready for any ordinary trouble that might occur.

"Now, Annie," said I, "promise me before I go out that you will remain in the house, it makes no difference what may occur."

"I can't, Frank."

"Think of our baby."

"But, oh, Frank, I can only think of you."

"But you must not come even if you do. If there should be danger here, which I am sure there cannot be, you would only increase my danger by being at my side. Be a good little woman," I said, kissing her tenderly, "and whatever you see, or whatever you hear, do not come out of the house to-night under any circumstances."

I left her, and opening the door softly crept out into the yard.

The light fleecy clouds only partly obscured the sky and the moon rays lighted up the landscape.

I paused for a moment in the dark shadow of an apple-tree, and glanced carefully about the yard.

It seemed at first glance to be peaceful and quiet, but now I was sure I caught the sight of a form crouching behind a rose-bush. It was a dark, stealthy form, and to me there was something frightful about it.

It looked like a panther, I was sure, and I even thought I could see its deadly fangs.

But as I accustomed my eyes more to the moonlight, and observed the outlines of the form through the rose-bushes, I made it out to be a man.

Just now the moonlight for a second fell on the polished panel of a revolver or the glittering blade of a knife.

It was a detective, and now I saw another creeping up under the fence.

What was I to do?

There was but one chance, and that was instantaneous flight. The detectives were beyond a doubt surrounding the house, and if I expected to escape, I must do so instantly.

There was no time for parleying.

I crouched behind some gooseberry bushes, and crept for about ten steps forward until I came to where there was a thick cluster of cherry-trees.

Here I arose, and under their dark shadows crept away until I had almost reached the gate.

I now noticed that the man at the rose-bush had disappeared, and knew that I might expect him to pounce upon me at almost any moment, for he was beyond a doubt aware of my presence.

While I was yet debating in my mind what course to pursue, a dark form sprang from the fence corner and seized me by the throat.

"You are my prisoner, sir," he hissed.

"Unhand me," I cried, "or I swear I shall make it worse for you."

"Surrender or die."

"Never!"

Then he attempted to thrust the muzzle of his pistol in my face, but I struck it away.

He blew a whistle, two more men sprang to his assistance.

At this moment I heard a shriek from the house, and

Annie came speeding down the lawn path, an iron poker in her hand.

She felled one of the detectives at a blow, and I knocked down the one in front of me.

The third fired twice at me and missed.

I shot him through the right wrist and he fled.

I then told my brave little wife to return to the house and ran to the barn and brought out my horse and mounted, and was gone before the two men knocked down had recovered.

"I shall always attribute my escape to my singular dream. But it is my hour for lunch, Mr. Stevens; please excuse me," said the outlaw.

"Certainly, certainly," I answered, and gathering up my manuscript I left his cell.

The jailer smiled as I passed out, and wanted to know if I was interviewing him for the newspapers, but I answered no, and went out.

### XIII.

#### FRANK JAMES BETRAYED.

THAT afternoon, as I entered, I found Frank James reading his favorite book, "Shakespeare." Strange to say, as much as blood and thunder novels have been charged to have been the stimulant which inspired the James Boys to deeds of outlawry and daring, they were never known to read one in their lives.

Neither was any other desperado known to be a novel reader.

"Shakespeare" was Frank James' favorite book. Next to that, the Bible, of which he was an admiring student.

"I believe, Mr. James, you are quite a lover of 'Shakespeare?'" I said.

"Yes sir; I think his dramas the best reading in the world."

"Which do you like best?"

"'Hamlet.'"

"'Hamlet' is a very entertaining play."

"Hamlet is a noble character. So gentle, so tender, and the way his memory lingers for his dead father says he was a loving son."

"Who is the next character in the play?"

"Horatio, his friend. The man who stood by him in all his darkest hours. Horatio has a courtly bearing, and is a noble fellow."

"Do you not like Lear?"

"No, he is a hot-headed, treacherous fellow, and above all things, Mr. Stevens, I despise treachery."

It was treachery that took my poor brother Jesse out of the world. Jesse was not as suspicious as I, and I have frequently told him he would get into trouble; that he would be betrayed some time, and so he was, and shot down like a dog by that villain Bob Ford.

I have no bitterness against any one connected with his assassination. Governor Crittenden doubtless thought it the only way to capture Jesse, and he was right, but if Jesse could have had a pardon and an assurance of peace he would have lived an honorable citizen, instead of being killed by treachery.

Was I ever betrayed? you ask. Yes, once in particular I remember now.



It was down in old Clay county, and by a man whom I thought my best friend.

Jesse and I had run and fought detectives and officers of the law for over fifty miles, when we separated at Lexington, and I went down to a farmer's house in Clay county.

It was almost dark when I reached his house, my horse almost exhausted, and myself covered with dust. It was at the close of a long hot day in September, and I had been running and fighting nearly all day.

Dave Smallwood had been in the Confederate service, and was for a short time with Quantrell, Todd and Anderson, until he left for more regular service under Price.

The idea of an ex-Confederate, especially one who had been in Missouri guerrilla service, betraying me, never for a moment entered my head.

I halloaed at the gate, and the farmer came out. Honest farmer indeed he was, if you call treachery honesty.

"Dave, who is in the house?" I asked.

"No one but my own folks," he answered. "Who are you?" and he tried to pierce the gathering twilight to see me.

"Don't you know me, Dave?" I asked.

"No."

"Come nearer and see."

He came quite up to the fence.

"I've heard that voice before but I swear I've forgot it."

"Come out and I will whisper my name!"

"Why ye be so secret about it? Are ye ashamed o' it?"

"It will be all right, Dave, when you understand it."

He came out cautiously.

"Now, what is it?"

"Your ear nearer, please."

"Here I am."

"I am Frank James."

"Aha!"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, well, may I be blessed."

"Have you seen any one around here, Dave?"

"No."

"I have been running and fighting until I am almost worn out."

"To-day?"

"Yes."

"Who with?"

"Timberlake part of the time, and part of the time Pinkerton's detectives."

"Well, well."

"Dave, I am tired out and want to stop here over night."

"Will I dare risk it, Frank?"

"Why?"

"You see it might get me into trouble."

"You are not going to deny an old friend and fellow-soldier the hospitality of your roof to-night, are you, Dave?"

When you appeal to the soldiership of an ex-Confederate, you are touching a very tender cord.

Dave consented, though I thought somewhat reluctantly.

Once in the house, and my poor tired horse well rubbed down and fed, I was given a fair supper for a farmer's table.

"I expect you are anxious to retire," said my host.

"I am tired, Dave, but I hardly dare sleep to-night. My pursuers may be on my track at almost any moment."

"Well, you had better lay down and sleep and I will keep watch over you."

Somehow there was something so strange and nervous in the manner of Dave Smallwood, that I felt rather uneasy.

I at last consented to retire and went up-stairs, where I threw myself on a bed.

In a few moments I was in a nervous, fitful slumber, which certainly could not have lasted over half an hour, when I awoke with a start by the outside door shutting almost noiselessly.

I sat bolt upright in bed a moment, and then, getting up, I went to the window, where I looked out upon the yard below.

The moon was shining brightly, and I could see Dave Smallwood walking quickly across the yard and gazing nervously up at my window.

"Helloa, Dave, where are you going?" I asked.

"My—my wife's sick, and I—I—am going for the doctor," he answered, in a hesitating, stammering manner.

The excuse was good enough, but there was something in the manner of the fellow which aroused my suspicions.

I dressed myself carefully, and, waiting until all was quiet once more, I crept out of the window and out upon the branches of an apple-tree which grew near the window.

Then to make my way to the ground was a very easy matter.

I descended without any one in the house being aware of what I was about, it seems, and went with all due caution to the stable.

My poor horse was still exhausted, but I put the saddle on his back and led him out of the stable to a thicket near it and tied him fast.

"Now, Dave Smallwood," I said, "if you are acting *bona-fide*, all will be well, and you shall never dream that I suspicioned you, but if you go to playing me false in any one particular, why you shall pay with your life for the treachery."

I was in the stable-loft watching and half-dozing.

It must have been about one or two o'clock in the morning when I heard the sound of horses' hoofs down the road.

Before I could climb out of the stable-loft, a dozen men thundered up and stopped near the barn lot.

"He's in the house in that winder, Mr. Timberlake," I heard the voice of Dave Smallwood say. "Now, when you get him, remember my share of the reward."

"Oh, yes, Dave," said Timberlake, "don't be afraid about that, you shall have your share."

"Now, I don't want to be known as having anything to do with this. You see, Frank and I were once in the service together, and I kind a like for him to know nothing about it, you know."

"All right, Dave, you say that's his window," pointing up to the window of the room I had occupied.

"Yes."

"You stay here, and we will go up to the house and get him."

"You must be careful or he will get away."



"Oh, yes—yes, very," said Timberlake. "We will make no move until we have the house well surrounded. You think he's there?"

"Oh, yes, I left him there."

"Now, boys," said Timberlake, "you must be careful, or he will fly out over your heads."

They deployed like skirmishers going into battle, and began a careful advance upon the house.

As soon as they were well out of the immediate vicinity of the stable I noiselessly swung myself down into a manger and from thence to a stall.

Dave Smallwood was standing in the stable door.

I crept toward him, and laid my left hand on his shoulder, and clapped the muzzle of my revolver to his temple.

"Dave, if you speak, or make any noise you will be shot," I said.

Dave was silent.

"Now come with me."

I led him carefully around to the rear of the farm and on to the thicket where my horse was.

"Where are you going to take me, Frank?" he asked.

"Come on, and ask no questions."

I took his arm and led him for about three miles, where we halted.

"Now, Dave," said I, "you betrayed me."

He was silent.

"You know enough of me to know I hate a traitor."

He was still silent.

"You would have sold my life for gold. Are you any better than me, who people say murders for money?"

He did not speak.

"What do you suppose I will do with you?"

"Do not kill me, Frank," he said, mournfully. "Remember I have a wife and children."

"Did you not know, when you sought to betray me, that I had a wife and children?"

"Yes."

"Are yours dearer to you than mine?"

"Oh, Frank, don't murder me in cold blood!" he groaned.

"No, Dave, I will not kill you without giving you a chance for your life. You were once a soldier, and I loved you as a brother; that alone prevents me from assassinating you. But you shall have a chance. Here are two pistols, exactly alike; take your choice; we will step off three paces, and wheel and fire."

I gave him a pistol and we started back to back.

"One, two——" I counted.

"Bang!" went a pistol, so close to my head that the powder burned me.

The treacherous scoundrel had tried to assassinate me.

I wheeled and caught sight of his fleeing form, raised my pistol and fired.

With a wild shriek he threw up his arms and fell.

I did not go near him, but sprang into the saddle and galloped away. My horse had become considerably rested, and we were many miles away before morning, safe among friends whom bribery could not corrupt.

I afterwards learned that Timberlake entered the house to find his bird flown, and that they were searching for

Smallwood when two pistol-shots were heard down on the creek.

They at once started in the direction of them, and found Dave Smallwood with a back broken by my shot.

He was carried home, but died the next day. But few had any sympathy for him, for he was a traitor.

#### XIV.

##### THE OLD FORTUNE-TELLER.

FOR some moments after the recital of his betrayal Frank James sat in silence and gazed upon the floor of his cell.

There seemed to be a sort of a melancholy air about him, and he seemed to regret that Dave Smallwood had betrayed him, and not that he had killed a traitor.

At length a pleasant smile breaking out on his face, he said:

"Mr. Stevens, do you believe in fortune-telling?"

"No, I can't say that I believe there is any truth in fortunes."

"Well, I don't either; but do you know I once had some queer adventures with a fortune-teller. Would you like to hear them?"

I answered that I would, and after taking a fresh chew of tobacco the famous bandit proceeded:

It was during the year 1874 that Jesse and I were down in Arkansas. We had not done a streak of business for some time, and were running rather low in spirits and cash.

Jesse, who was always fond of adventure, wanted to make an attack on the Hot Springs stage coach, but I persuaded him not to do so.

We went to a little town, or rather village, which was named, as near as I can remember, Fleetwood.

The people were very ignorant and very superstitious, and many of them very poor.

There was but one moneyed man in the village, his name was Dodson, and he kept a store, saloon, and hotel.

His money was always locked in a safe, and we knew that we could not get at it well, for the safe, which was locked day and night, was beyond our powers to break open, for neither Jess nor myself were good at burglary.

There was a small band of gypsies stopping near the village, and everybody were having their fortunes told. I went one day to see the old gypsy hag who was telling fortunes, and she said, as soon as she saw me:

"You have something on your mind; just cross the poor gypsy's hand with silver, and I will tell you all about it."

"How much, granny?"

"One dollar."

I gave her a dollar and she proceeded.

"Let me look at your hand. Ah, now, I see you are in trouble; you want to do something and you cannot. The old fortune-teller will help you——"

"Hold on, granny," said I, suddenly falling on a plan.

"You can aid me."

"Yes."

"Oh, wait, will you?" said I. "I care nothing about your fortune, but would you like this?" and I held up a twenty-dollar gold-piece.



"Oh, de poor gypsy never had so much money in all her life."

"Would you like to have it?"

"I would."

"Well, you shall if you will do as I tell you."

"De gypsy will."

"Do you know Dodson the merchant?"

"Yes."

"Well, he has had his fortune told two or three times?"

"Him have."

"He is very much afraid of losing some of his money, is he not?"

"Yes, berry."

"Well, if the gypsy will tell him this, that there is to be some burglars enter his house and rob it to-night, and that the only safe place for his wealth and treasure is in the old hollow tree which stands at the forks of the road, you shall have this."

"Me will—me will" she answered. "He come now, he come now, go in tent and listen."

I darted in the gypsy's tent and throwing myself on the straw was within a few feet of the old gypsy fortune-teller.

Dodson, who was a coward as well as a miser, and as superstitious as he was mean, had come to have his fortune told over again.

Through a rent in the canvas I watched his face as the old gypsy told him of the dark burglars who were coming in the blackness of the night to burst open his iron safe and get all his money. I never saw a more horrified man in all my life when she told him they would not only take all his money, but his life as well.

"Is there no help, no safety. Where shall I put it?" he asked.

"Not in de big iron safe, dey find it."

"Where then?" he asked, "for Heaven's sake where?"

"In de hollow tree."

"Hollow tree! Where? What hollow tree?"

"De hollow tree."

"Where; what hollow tree?"

"At de fork of de road. Take him all dar at once, before de dark night come."

Suspicious and miserly as he was superstitious, there was no fear of Dodson confiding his fears or the caution given by the gypsy to any one.

I saw him go away, and by making two or three trips he carried all his money to the hollow tree.

Jesse and I now got our horses out in the woods near the hollow tree, and in the night we dismounted and went toward it.

As we expected, we found Dodson standing guard at the tree.

He was armed with a double-barreled shot-gun, and might prove a dangerous fellow to handle.

"Halt! Who comes there?" he asked.

"It's friends," said Jess.

"What is your name?"

Jesse, who was in a mischievous mood, answered:

"My name is Thomas O. Didymus Christopher Holmes Christian Cadwallader Wallace A. Jones. My friend here hasn't a short name like me so I will not attempt to call it."

"Stop, you are suspicious rascals," cried Dodson.

"Why are you prowling about here?"

"I heard the stars fall once," said Jess; "and I am looking for Saturn to get the ring from around her to go on my sweetheart's finger."

"Are you a fool?" roared the angry guard.

"Yes."

"Well, don't you come any nearer or I will spoil your ugly countenance, I warrant."

"Don't kill him, Jess, if it can be helped," I whispered.

"I won't," he answered.

"What are you rascals talking about—go away, go away; I don't want to hurt you."

"Oh, no, you won't, I guess—why should you?" said Jesse, with that peculiar coolness common to no other person. "Can you tell us why you are guarding this spot as though some hidden treasure were buried here? Have you found a bee-tree, or is there a raccoon in the woods?"

"Go away!"

"Have we no right here?"

"Stop!"

At this moment he caught a gleam of Jesse's revolver.

"Bang!"

"Bang!"

Both barrels of his double-barreled shot-gun were fired, but the shot whistled above our heads, cutting off the leaves and strewing the ground with them in our rear.

Before the echoes had ceased to ring throughout the woods, Jesse had knocked down Dodson and transferred all the treasure from the tree to a sack he carried.

"That's no place for treasures," he said, jocularly, as he carried off the load of wealth to our horses.

We paid the old fortune-teller, and I am sure never was fortune told to so good account for the robber and so bad account for the miser, who was hoarding up his wealth to rust and benefit no one.

## XV.

### THE ATTACK ON CASTLE JAMES.

OF course Mr. James' ideas of right and wrong did not correspond with my own, but that had nothing to do with the stories he was telling.

I was seeking after the truth, and wanted his stories, with all their shocking barbarities and crimes, just as they happened. I must say I do not think Mr. James tried to smooth over the matters very much.

The next day I found him in his cell, ready to discuss his own history.

"There is one thing, Mr. James, I would like to have you tell me," said I.

"What is it?" he asked.

"Of the attack on your house."

"There have been so many attacks on our house, my house, and the other houses we lived in, that you will have to particularize, Mr. Stevens."

"Well, I mean the attack of Pinkerton's detectives, usually called the attack on Castle James."

Oh, yes, I understand you now, said Mr. James. You mean the attack in which my little half-brother Arthur Samuels was killed and my mother made a cripple for life.



Well that, as you will remember, was in January. My brother Jess and I had enjoyed a considerable season of repose.

We had not lost any of our vigilance, for we had been to Kearney that same afternoon of the attack, and found all quiet.

We returned home, and our little brother put up our horses for us.

He informed us that Mrs. Askew had been at our house on a visit nearly all day, and that she went home as soon as we came up.

We did not like this. Daniel Askew was not our kind of a man at all. He had been a soldier in the Union army, and was never in sympathy with us, though Mrs. Askew and our mother had been quite friendly.

"What do you think of it, Jess?" I asked.

"I don't know," he answered.

"She may have been here on a visit."

"Yes, or to quiz mother."

"We will ask mother."

We went in the house, and asked her, but she had played her part so well that mother was completely blinded by her manner. There was nothing, she declared, that would arouse our suspicions.

That night we went to bed in the attic room, and were soon in the land of dreams.

It must have been near midnight, or perhaps a little after, that the whole house was aroused by the furious barking of the dogs my step-father owned.

Jesse and I both sprang from our beds and buckled on our revolvers.

At this moment we heard the voice of our mother at the foot of the stairs, saying:

"Jesse, Frank, be careful, some one is coming."

We hurriedly dressed ourselves and went to the gable window.

There through the dim starlight we could see clearly outlined against the crisp snow, a two-horse wagon, with a driver on the seat, whom we knew to be Daniel Askew, though the wagon was far away down the hill.

Eight men were coming up and surrounded the house.

We ran down below just as some one knocked at the kitchen door.

"Who's there?" mother asked.

"Open the door in the name of the State," said a deep voice outside.

"I do not know who are, and will not open my door," mother answered.

Little Arthur, then but nine years old, was in the room, and we tried to get him and mother to go out, but he would not. Mother also declared she would stay.

The knocking and thumping now at the door became loud and furious.

Jesse put his pistol to the door and fired.

A wild yell followed the report. A yell which told that some one was hurt.

"Crack!"

"Crack!"

"Crack!" came a shower of bullets through the kitchen window.

"Into the other room, mother," I cried.

"Never," she answered, her eyes flashing like a tigress at bay. "While they seek to kill my sons I will remain and die with them."

"Crack!"

"Crack!"

"Bang!"

"Bang!" came shots from the east, west, and north windows.

"Crack!"

"Crack!" came blows against the door.

We began to fire.

In a moment the room was filled with smoke.

"Put out the light, mother," I cried.

She sprang to the table on which was a lighted lamp, and a bullet grazed her cheek.

A roar of fire-arms very much like a skirmish was kept up from without.

Mother seized the lamp and blew out the light.

"Frank, take the north window," cried Jesse. "I will watch the door."

These were the points from which the detectives were making their principal attack.

I took the window, and Jesse the door.

"As soon as a pistol is empty give it to me to reload," said our daring mother.

You may have read of gallant defenses of castles of old, of forts on the frontier where women won the guns of Captain Mollies of the revolution, but none ever excelled my mother, Zerelda Samuels.

She loaded pistols for us, and cheered us on to victory.

The battle raged, bullets hummed and crashed through doors and windows, but we knew our shots were telling.

The flash of fire-arms told us that two of our enemies were down on the snow.

Suddenly there was a great crash, the room flared up by a blaze of light, and a heavy burning ball fell in the room.

It may not have been intended for anything more than a light, but it was certainly a hand grenade.

Mother says she saw a fuse to it.

To explode in the room it might kill us all, and mother kicked it in the fire-place.

As she did so, a terrific report shook the house, and splinters of the shell flew in all directions.

As you know, mother's arm was torn off below the elbow. Brother Arthur fell crying in the agonies of death, his bowels torn open by the fragments of the terrible shell.

Jess and I were like madmen, we burst out of the door, fired right and left until the detectives fell back, actually ran, and we saddled our horses at the stable and left.

How many of the detectives were killed or badly wounded in that night's fight the world will never know.

I do not think there were to exceed three who did not get a shot that night, serious or slight. A few days after, as you know, Daniel Askew was shot dead in his own door, and though we were accused of having something to do with it, I have no fear of our county ever harming either of us.

Please excuse me until this afternoon, Mr. Stevens, I wish to write some letters to my old friends, General Shelby and Senator George G. Vest.

I of course excused him, and left his cell, wondering how public statesmen could still retain their reputations and be



familiar friends and advisers of the worst gang of outlaws the world has ever known.

Many others have asked the same question. But when we come to think of the powerful friends Frank James had, we think it no wonder that he defied law and detectives for twenty years, and was acquitted so easily when tried.

## XVI.

## IN A WELL.

"DURING your career, Mr. James, you must have had many curious hiding-places."

I have, he said. In fact, I can scarcely think of any place where a human being could be concealed which has not at some time or other afforded me a shelter.

Shortly after the Muncie affair, in which you know the papers erroneously, of course, stated that I took part, I found myself hard pressed, one day, by six as determined men as I ever saw.

They were all mounted on excellent horses, and my little blooded bay mare, which had never been surpassed by anything, save Siroc, in speed and endurance, could hardly keep a convenient distance ahead.

Sometimes they were within a mile of me.

Fortunately there were no telegraphs or railroads over the particular country we were traveling, so they could not unchain the lightning to head me off.

It was in Clay county, and I knew my enemies must be two miles, anyway, in my rear, when I stopped at the house of a friend named Hatch, who, by the way, is a relative of the congressman.

Hatch's house stood in the midst of a forest, and you suddenly burst upon it as you gallop along the road.

"Andrew," said I, "I am close pressed, and must hide here."

"Who is after you?"

"Some of Pinkerton's detectives," I cried.

"How far behind, Frank?"

"Not over two miles."

"Well, I don't know where to put you."

"You must find a place somewhere, Andrew Hatch, or Frank James is either a dead man or a prisoner."

"Let me see."

"Think quick," said I.

"I have it."

"What?"

"Here, Wesley, take this horse down to the woods pasture, turn her loose, and throw the saddle and bridle in the thicket."

I had the utmost confidence in Andrew Hatch. None of his name ever went back on an ex-Confederate.

"Now come, Frank."

"Where are you going to stow me?" I asked.

"In the well."

"Andrew, what do you mean?"

"Come on, Frank, there is no time now to ask questions or make explanations. Don't you hear the sounds of horses feet upon the bridge?"

"Yes."

"They will be here in five minutes. Come to the well by all means, it's your only chance."

I felt as though I would almost rather turn and face my enemies than enter that dark well when I came up to it and gazed down into its terrible depths.

"It's safe, Frank, there's no poisonous gasses down there; go ahead," said Andrew Hatch, throwing a rope down in the well which I took hold of and began to descend by.

I took hold of the rope and started down, placing my toes firmly against the rocks with which the well was walled.

"The wall is all solid, Frank, don't be afraid of any part coming loose," said my friend.

"Yes," said I. "Are they coming?"

"They are."

"How near?"

"They will soon be here."

I now reached the water, and at my friend's suggestion buried myself up to my neck, just leaving my head out, which I kept close against the wall, so it might not be observed.

The pursuers galloped up to the front gate and drew rein.

"Hello!" their leader cried. "Hello there! hel-loo-oo-oo!"

The dogs commenced barking. I could hear them very plainly from where I was.

Andrew Hatch went out to the front gate.

"What d'ye want?" he asked.

"Have you seen anything o' Frank James?" was the question.

"Don't know Frank James," was the answer.

"Has any one been here to-day?"

"Yes, several."

"Who?"

"Neighbors, mostly."

"Who has been here in the last hour?"

"Myself and my family."

"Have you seen no stranger pass by?"

"Yes."

"Who?"

"How should I know? If I'd known him, he wouldn't a been a stranger."

"Well, how did he look?"

"He looked a most fagged out."

"Old or young man?"

"I'd take him to be about twenty-five or thirty."

"His horse?"

"Think it was a bay."

"Been run?"

"A'most pegged out."

"That's him, boys," said the leader.

"Yes," the others answered.

"Did he stop here?"

"Just a minit."

"What for?"

"To inquire the way to Independence."

"Anything else?"

"Got a drink."

"That reminds me, boys, we are thirsty. Where's yer well, farmer?"

Andrew had not thought of this.



He afterwards told me that he would have given anything for two wells, but he had only one.

He tried the water in the bucket in the house, but it was not fresh enough.

The first intimation I had of the near proximity of my enemies was the creaking of a windlass, and looking up, seeing the well-bucket slowly descending.

I could not at first understand it, but Andrew Hatch, looking down in the well, said:

"Just wait a bit, gentlemen, and I'll have a bucket of the best water in the country for ye. Then ye kin ride on, and I hope ye'll catch that rascal, Frank James."

The bucket descended to my side, and I dipped it under myself.

When they drew the bucket up, the cold water dripping down upon my head occasioned me the most excruciating pain.

But I kept myself as well out of the way as I could.

It seemed an age to me that the men stood about the well, and every moment I was in danger of being seized with a cramp.

I fought off the horrid feelings as well as I could, though I felt myself chilled to the bone, and my sensibilities becoming benumbed.

Still they remained at the well. They even gazed down into it, but if they saw my head it only appeared to be a speck on the water.

I intended as soon as they were gone to crawl out and cling to the wall.

But just as soon as I had hoped they were gone they returned and began to water their horses.

Bucketful after bucketful of the ice-cold water was drawn up over my head, and the drippings like showers of torture fell on my head, neck, and shoulder, until I thought I should go mad, and was on the point two or three times of coming boldly out and fighting my enemies.

But just as I grew desperate and mad, my enemies turned away from the well, mounted their horses and left. I was then drawn to the top more dead than alive.

For three days I stayed at the house of my friend, Andrew Hatch, severely ill, and then when I recovered my horse was refreshed and I went to Kentucky.

My hiding-place in the well was as disagreeable an adventure as one need want. If you will call to-morrow, Mr. Stevens, I will have more to tell you. Governor Johnson and Supreme Court Commissioner Phillips, whom I have employed as my attorneys, are to be here to see me.

"You have no fears of conviction?" Mr. James.

"Not while I am in the hands of my friends as I am now. We are all ex-Confederates together. With an ex-lieutenant governor and a man who is a member of the Supreme Court bench to defend me, what have I to fear?"

"Nothing," I answered, leaving his cell, thankful that all congressmen, statesmen, and judges were not like those in Missouri.

## XVII.

### A CAVALRY DUEL.

THE next morning I found Mr. James' spirits greatly refreshed by some pleasing information given him by his attorneys.

"Well, Mr. James, I would like to hear something to-day of your army life," said I, laying my writing-paper and fountain pen upon the table.

Well, sir, he answered, I would just as soon talk of that as any other part of my personal history.

In fact I would rather.

There is less treachery, less danger, less that is unpleasant and disagreeable during the war period of my rather eventful history than any other part of it.

I once participated in what we call a cavalry duel.

It was after we had fought the battle of Centralia, where we had killed every man we could lay our hands on who wore a blue coat, save one whom I fired at seventeen times, and, though my bullets marked his head and face everywhere, not one broke the skin.

This fellow Bill Anderson spared swore he would kill the farmer we left him with if he did not take the best of care of him.

If you are acquainted with the history of Missouri guerrillas, you will remember that shortly after the Centralia massacre Todd, Anderson and Quantrell separated.

Many of our men went with Price, but I stayed with Quantrell.

He was my beau ideal of a man, for he and Anderson took no prisoners.

One night I was sent with twelve men down on the Little Blue to reconnoiter. I had proceeded about five miles when suddenly a picket called out:

"Halt!"

We reined in our horses.

"Who goes there?" the picket demanded.

But I said nothing. I knew we were near a party of Feds, and there was no telling their strength.

We had a new recruit with us named Ellison. He was but little more than a boy, and I never saw a more infamous coward in all my life. He was from some of the Mississippi counties, but being a sympathizer had come over and joined us in the fall of 1864 to keep from being forced into the militia.

"Let's run, let's go—we'll all be killed!" the coward chattered.

"Hush up, George!" said some one who knew him; "you'll be safe."

The guard who challenged us I knew was an experienced soldier. Had he been nervous he would undoubtedly have fired on us.

"Let's dash right in on 'em," said Jack Hill. "We can cut our way through."

"No, no, Jack, we must wait until daylight."

We sat upon our horses in the edge of a wood, and just at daybreak saw a small squad of Federal cavalry not much larger than our own.

"Well, boys," said I, gathering up my reins, "let's give them battle."

I had hardly uttered the command, before our new recruit wheeled about and ran away like the wind. One of the boys fired at him and I think he hit him, either in the leg or hip, but I never saw him again, and do not know what became of him.

The Federal soldiers were true grit, and drew up their men in line of battle to meet us.



Both parties advanced carefully to a ridge.

We advanced to within a hundred yards before a shot had been fired.

All of a sudden the lieutenant in command of the Federal squad cried out:

"Fire!"

Instantly every carbine was brought to their shoulders.

"Down!" I shouted.

Not a second too soon either.

"Crack, crack, crack-aek-aek," rang out a storm of bullets, and one man and one horse were hit.

"Forward!" I shouted. "Charge!"

Away we dashed pell-mell, hurry-skurry. The ground seemed to quake under our horses feet.

With the reins in our teeth, and the revolvers in either hand, we poured a shower of bullets at our enemies.

Two or three of our enemies were down, but their repeating carbines had emptied two more of our saddles.

The Federals did not fall back one inch, but with revolver and saber dashed among us.

I saw one of our men go down with a cleft skull from a saber, and heard others shriek from wounds.

I knew now that we had met our match. The cavalry duel would terminate badly for us so I sounded the retreat.

One or two of our wounded fell into the hands of the enemy, and, strange to say, their lives were spared.

Six of us returned to camp, and we did well, I now think, to get off so well from our cavalry duel.

### XVIII.

#### JESSE JAMES AS A SCHOOL-TEACHER.

"Is the story true of Jesse James teaching school?" I asked of Mr. James.

Yes, he did teach one school in Missouri. In fact, I rather think he has taught two or three schools, but one in particular that I recollect.

Jess was possessed of more of that article, brazen impudence, which by modern lexicographers is denominated cheek, than any man I ever knew.

One fall several years ago we found ourselves with some spare time and but little spare money.

We were in a hotel at Kansas City when Jesse said:

"Frank, I'm going down in south-west Missouri and teach school."

"Why, Jesse, what are you going to do that for?"

"For stamps."

"I think you have a more rapid and ready way of procuring stamps."

"Well, but I want to try my hand as an educator. I want to teach the young idea how to shoot."

"You had better be careful that the more matured idea don't get a shot at you."

"Oh, well, Frank, we are accustomed to that. I have written down there to a friend to secure me a school, and he has done so. Henceforth I am Mr. Jackson, the school-teacher."

"When do you start?"

"To-morrow."

Jesse went, took up his school, and seemed quite successful.

There were some large boys attending the school who had been ungovernable, and when Jesse took charge of it these malecontents were making mental calculations as to the length of time it would take for them to run him away.

Two or three of the larger were in the habit of carrying pistols.

One day he went to punish one of them, and he drew his revolver.

Jesse snatched it from his hand, flung it out of the window, and whaled him until he roared out for mercy.

From that time on school progressed well, and he had no more trouble with the scholars.

An eccentric old stranger came in the neighborhood visiting the schools. There was not a man in the district where Jesse was teaching who thought him other than Mr. Jackson, as he represented himself to be. No one dreamed he was Jesse James, the bandit king.

But Jess had grown tired of this hum-drum, every-day school life, and began to sigh once more for the road and the saddle, where he could refresh himself with a moonlight gallop, have some amusement with a stage or railroad train.

This eccentric old man, who gave his name as Clark Stevens, came around at last to visit Jesse James', or Mr. Jackson's school.

Jess said the moment he entered the door he knew he was disguised.

"Ye've got a fine skule here," said the old fellow, taking off his hat and looking 'round.

"Very," said Jesse. "Where are you from?"

"I'm from Eelynoy. I war once a skule teacher myself."

"It's been a long time ago!"

"Oh, yes, very long time ago, but I knows a heap about it yit."

"What are you doing here?"

"I come in to heer the classes recite."

Jesse called out a class, though he kept a close look-out on the stranger.

The old man at last got round to the rear of the teacher and before he knew it had the muzzle of a pistol at the butt of his ear.

"You are my prisoner," he hissed in a voice far more strange than he had used before. "Jesse James, you are my prisoner."

It has always been our plan to act instantly. A moment's delay would have been fatal.

He started back and seized the muzzle so suddenly that the detective, for the pretended old man was one of Pinkerton's detectives, was taken by surprise.

"Crack!" went the pistol, but the shot whistled into the ceiling.

In a moment Jesse had seized a heavy rule with his left hand, and struck the detective on the temple a blow which stunned him and cut a deep gash in his head.

Then drawing his own pistol, Jess pushed the detective from him.

The confused man fired two or three shots more, which sent the children pell-mell out of the school-room.

Jesse shot him through the head, and leaping through the window ran away into the woods.

A few moments later, when the terrified children return-



ed to the school-room, they found the strange man lying dead upon the platform where was the teacher's desk, and their school-master gone, never to return.

## XIX.

### JESSE OFFERS A PRESENT.

"Is it true that your brother Jesse one time offered the editor of the *Kansas City Times* a present, Mr. James?" I asked, when Frank had finished narrating Jesse's adventures as a school-teacher.

Yes, it is true. Jesse was a peculiar man. He never forgave an enemy nor forgot a friend.

John N. Edwards, who, as you remember, was the editor of the *Kansas City Times* at that time, was always a warm friend to our family.

Edwards was, during the war, not only a rebel soldier, but a guerrilla.

He was a daring fellow, who had no scruples about shooting holes through blue-coats; it made no difference who was inside of them.

He was with us at Lawrence, and helped in Centralia.

John was a noble fellow, and I love him yet.

Well, you remember how Jesse James robbed the fair-grounds at Kansas City?

He went to the box where the cashier had been selling tickets, and looking in through the window, said:

"What would you say, now, if I was to say that I was Jesse James, and tell you to hand me that box of money?"

"I would tell you to go to thunder!" the cashier responded.

"Oh! would you?" asked Jesse.

"Yes."

"Are you real certain?"

"Of course I am," said the cashier.

"Then we'll see. I am Jesse James, and if you don't hand over that money pretty quick, I'll bore a hole through you!"

The astounded cashier now found himself looking down the muzzle of a dangerous-looking revolver.

He handed over the box with the money, and Jesse conveyed it to where some friends sat on their horses holding his. They rode off together, and were never molested, much to the chagrin of the Kansas City Fair Association.

John N. Edwards had written up the feat in his flowery manner, and gave Jesse credit for possessing remarkable courage and cool judgment.

Jesse, who read the papers very closely, soon stumbled on to John's editorial.

He mounted his black horse Siroc, and rode into Kansas City, where he was unknown by his enemies, and safe among his friends.

He stopped in the street in front of the *Times* office, and got a boy to go up to the office and tell the editor to come down.

The editor, wondering who could have the impudence to call him down from his office to the street, and impelled by curiosity to see the man with such a superabundance of cheek, came hurriedly down-stairs about as much annoyed as he was amused.

"How are you John?" said Jess.

Jesse's broad-brimmed hat was slouched over his eyes, and at first the editor did not recognize him.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"Don't you know me, John?"

"No."

"Look again!"

"Well, I know you have the impudence of the devil."

"Put on your glasses, John, your eyes are getting old."

"I have certainly heard that voice before," said Major Edwards, taking a step or two toward the strange horse-man.

"Yes, you heard it, Lawrence, at Centralia and Richmond when the battle raged hottest, and when our banner fell it was this arm that raised it."

"Oh, Jesse! My God! are you here?"

"Yes."

"Why did you come?"

"To see you, John."

"But the danger?"

"Oh, nonsense."

"You may be discovered, Jess."

"People are not so ready to discover me as they used to be."

"But, Jess, the police——"

"Oh, hang the police. I came, John, to see you. The fact is, I like that piece you wrote about us boys, and I thought I would give you something. Here, take this watch."

Jesse drew from his pocket a diamond seal gold watch, worth at least five hundred dollars.

"No, no, Jess," said John, "don't you know I dare not do that? This watch belonged to somebody else once, and don't you know it might be recognized?"

"That's so," said Jess, returning the watch and drawing a hand full of bills. "Well, here's a thousand dollars. No one will recognize it."

"No, Jess, I can't take anything. I don't want a thing for speaking the honest sentiment of my heart."

Jesse turned his horse about to ride off, when a new thought entered his mind, and halting his horse, he said:

"Well, John, is there anybody around here you want killed?"

Edwards assured his friend that he could not accommodate him in that particular, and Jesse rode off, sorry not to be of service to his friend in some way.

## XX.

### THE LAST ADVENTURE.

You would like to hear my last adventure, Mr. Stevens. Well, I will tell it to you, though I have not told you one-hundredth part of the others, nor can I. In the first place, I have not time; in the second, it would wear out your patience; and in the third place, if they were all told, no one could be found who would believe them.

I was in Tennessee, and had already serious thoughts of surrendering.

Ever since the assassination of my poor brother Jesse I knew I would never be safe anywhere.

My wife, as dear a woman as ever lived, was in constant apprehension lest I should be discovered.



One evening I was sitting on the porch watching the sunset, and wondering what would be the result if I should go to Missouri and surrender, when I observed a strange man coming down the road.

He stopped at the front gate, and wanted to know who lived there.

"Woodson," I answered.

"Could you keep a stranger over night?" he asked.

I thought at once the man was a detective, and answered:

"Yes, sir."

He came in and seemed delighted.

"I have traveled a good ways," he said.

"Would you like to have supper?" I asked.

"Oh, yes, if you please, sir," he quickly answered.

I rose carelessly and went into the kitchen where my wife was. In a low tone I told her to get his supper, and that I had suspicions that the fellow was a detective.

I had my revolvers under my coat, and knew he could not get the drop on me.

On returning I saw him dart back to his chair, and knew he had been watching me, but never pretended to see him, and carelessly took my place in my chair.

We began to talk of the weather and the country and politics.

My friend professed to be a rabid democrat, and went on to abuse the northern abolitionists to a great extent, but I could easily see he was playing a part.

"I heard that Frank James was livin' in Tennessee?" he said at last.

"You did?" said I.

"Yes. I wish I could see him, I just kind a like him."

"You might not like him so well if you would see him," I answered.

"And Jess is dead."

"I see that the papers state so."

"Well, I am sorry."

"I don't suppose that many are."

At this moment Annie announced supper ready, and I told my unwelcome guest to come in to supper.

At the supper table he was very loquacious, quite agreeable, and seemed to put on an extra effort to make himself charming.

We adjourned to the sitting-room again, where he tried to renew the subject of the James Boys.

I followed him along, neither attempting to evade the subject or press it.

Bed-time came and I saw that my man was getting uneasy. I put him in a bedroom which had no outside window, and as soon as his door was closed tied a string to the knob, attaching the other end to a bell in my room.

I sent Annie and the boy to bed, and sat in the door with my revolver in my hand.

About midnight the bell rang.

I sprang out at the door and threw the rays of a dark lantern in the face of my guest, who had just come out of his apartment.

"Hold!" I said. "Move and you die."

"Frank James, you are my prisoner," and he leveled his pistol at my breast.

For a moment we stood thus, and then the detective said:

"I don't wish to kill you, Frank James, but you are my prisoner, now surrender quietly and all will go well."

"If you know I am Frank James," said I, "I know who you are, and you know enough of me to know that I will not surrender to any man."

We both had our pistols leveled, and I resolved on a dangerous expedient—dangerous to the detective I mean. My eye glancing along the barrel of my pistol saw that it would strike his muzzle quivering, and I pulled the trigger.

"Crack!" rang out the report, and the bullet striking his pistol at the muzzle knocked it out of his hand, discharging it in the air.

As much by luck as good marksmanship the bullet glanced away without touching the detective.

Before he could recover himself I sprang forward and knocked him down with the butt of my revolver.

He fell like a log, and running my hand in his pocket I drew out a pair of handcuffs which I put on him.

When he recovered himself he was a prisoner.

I had my wife guard him, and at daylight she was to give him his liberty while I hurried away to Missouri, where I surrendered to Governor Crittenden as you know, and was brought here to be tried.

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## THE INDIAN'S NEMESIS.

MANY—many years ago, before the great battle of Tippecanoe had taught the Indian tribes of the west that the white men had rights that would be maintained at any cost, there lived on the banks of the Miami River a family by the name of Duncan.

As the name indicates, they were of Scotch lineage, having the pluck and indomitable energy that characterizes the Scotch people the world over.

The family consisted of an aged couple and their three children—two sons and a daughter.

They had lived there on the banks of the beautiful river for a number of years, happy and contented.

The Indians were their friends, hundreds of whom had



shared their hospitality, and talked with the beautiful Minnie Dunean about the legends of their tribe.

Robert and Horace Dunean, the two sons of the aged couple, hunted and fished with the Indians, sometimes remaining for days with them, until they were personally acquainted with nearly every member of the tribe.

They were aged twenty and eighteen years, and Minnie was in all the glories of sweet sixteen at the time of which we write.

She was as lovely as a rose, and it was no wonder that Grey Eagle, the young Miami chief, fell desperately in love with her.

One day the young chief called at the cabin of the Duncans, and was received with cordiality by the family.

He was tall, and straight as an arrow, with a noble cast of countenance, and an eye like an eagle's.

But on this occasion he seemed sad, and at times, nervous.

He had been out hunting, and came in with a fine buck, which lay at his feet, near the door of the cabin.

"What is the matter with the Grey Eagle to-day?" asked old Father Dunean, after a lengthy silence. "He does not talk to-day, nor does his eye gleam like the eagle's."

"Grey Eagle is nervous to-day," replied the young chief, "and his heart is away up in his throat."

"That should not be. Grey Eagle is a great chief, and he should have a wife in his wigwam to drive away such feelings, and keep his heart in its proper place."

The young chief's eyes flashed with a glad light as he heard the old man.

"The words of my pale-face brother are as music in the ears of Grey Eagle," said the young chief, "and his heart is now glad. Grey Eagle loves the White Rose, and he wants her for his wife."

At these words the old man's eyes flashed fire. He felt insulted that his cherished, idolized Minnie should be sought in marriage by an Indian. She, who was worthy to be the bride of a king, the wife of a savage Indian! The thought was too much to be entertained a single moment. But the old Scotch caution came to his aid, and he controlled himself admirably as he replied to the young chief:

"I cannot blame the young chief for loving my daughter, but she cannot be his wife; she is too young."

"Grey Eagle loves the White Rose, and will wait until she is old enough to be his wife," replied Grey Eagle.

"If Grey Eagle is wise he will look for a wife among the beautiful maidens of his people. The beasts of the field and the fowls of the air all mate with their kind, as the Great Spirit intended they should. Let the white man and the red man look for wives among their own people."

"The Great Spirit speaks through the hearts of his people," said Grey Eagle, "and the heart of Grey Eagle calls for the White Rose."

"Minnie—Minnie!" called Mrs. Dunean, as she saw her daughter coming from the spring with a wreath of wild flowers on her head, looking more beautiful than ever.

"What, mother?" she answered, merrily, tripping gracefully towards the little group in front of the cabin, and then seeing Grey Eagle, exclaimed:

"Why, here is Grey Eagle! I am glad to see you, chief,

for I wanted to hear some more of those wild, beautiful legends of your people."

"Grey Eagle has come to ask you to be his wife, my daughter," said the mother. "What answer have you to give him?"

Minnie turned pallid as death, and turned an appealing look at the young chief.

"It cannot be," she said. "I am too young, and—and do not love him. Let the great chief seek a wife among his own people. I will be a friend to him, and rejoice when he triumphs over his enemies."

"Grey Eagle cannot love another—the White Rose has his heart, and must be his wife," haughtily replied the chief, his brow clouding with fierce anger.

"The Grey Eagle talks like a fool!" responded the old man. "My daughter shall not be his wife!"

"Grey Eagle is a great warrior—his enemies fly before him. The White Rose shall be his wife and be the queen of his people," said Grey Eagle. "I have spoken," and throwing his quiver across his back, proudly walked away and disappeared in the forest.

"That fellow is going to give us trouble," said old Dunean. "Robert and Horace must not go away any more."

"Father, I don't believe Grey Eagle would harm any of us," said Minnie. "He has been a kind friend to us, and would not do anything to make us think any less of him."

"All of which shows how little you know Indian character, my child," said her father. "When an Indian says he will do a thing, let it be good or bad, he will make an honest effort to do it."

Days, weeks and months passed by, and nothing more was seen of Grey Eagle.

The Duncans often heard of him on the hunt, and Robert Dunean once went in search of him, in the hope of ascertaining his intentions towards his lovely sister. But the wily chief avoided him, and kept out of the way.

Soon trouble arose between the Indians and the whites all along the border, and the mutterings of a coming storm were heard in the distance. Bands of hostile Miamis were going in every direction, and collisions between them and the settlers were not infrequent.

The Duncans did not anticipate any trouble themselves, because they were on friendly terms with the whole tribe.

One day Robert and Horace were out hunting, and came across a party of Miamis in war-paint. Something prompted Robert to conceal himself from observation.

Motioning to Horace to follow him, he plunged into the thicket and crouched down so low that a strict search would have been necessary to find him. The party passed silently by in single file, each Indian stepping in the tracks of the others, to prevent their number being counted by any one on the trail.

"I wonder where Grey Eagle is going to-day?" Robert remarked, after the band had passed.

"They are in war-paint and mean mischief," said Horace.

"No doubt of that, and we must be careful, or we may get into trouble with some of their straggling bands."

"Oh, they all know us," said Horace, "and know that we are their friends."



"Nevertheless, it will be well for us to watch them very close."

When the two brothers reached home later in the afternoon they found it a smoking ruin. Only a pile of ashes remained to tell the story. In the midst of the ashes they found the charred remains of two human beings.

"This is the work of Grey Eagle!" hissed Robert, through pallid lips and clenched teeth. "He has murdered our parents and carried Minnie away;" and then, holding his rifle aloft in one hand and his hunting-knife in the other, said:

"In the name of God and my murdered parents, I swear never to cease warring on the Miamis until I have rescued our sister and avenged the death of our parents!"

"Amen! and I, too," said Horace, holding rifle and trusty knife above his head.

"And I swear not to stop until Grey Eagle, and each of the warriors who helped him in this foul crime, are wiped out!"

"Amen! and I, too," responded Horace.

"Now for the trail!" said Robert, plunging into the forest, following the plain trail the Indians had left. Night came on, and the trail could no longer be seen.

"We know where Grey Eagle lives," said Robert. "Come on, let's go direct there, and beard him in his den."

"Robert," said Horace, in a calm tone of voice, "if we would live to fulfill our vow, we must be cautious, and not rush into danger where we would be destroyed in a minute."

"Horace, you are right. But for that warning I would have rushed into the village and attacked him in the midst of his warriors. For Minnie's sake, I will be cool and cautious."

As they approached the village they saw that there was some little excitement among the women and children.

"Wait for me here, Horace," said Robert, "and I will creep forward and see what I can find."

Robert then left his brother standing in the edge of the forest, and crept forward toward the lodge of the Indians. Horace had not stood there more than five minutes before he saw a young Indian warrior coming towards him. The moon was shining brightly, and it was evident the savage never suspected the presence of an enemy. As soon as he was inside the shadows of the great forest he felt a crash—which was the crash of doom to him—on his head, and sank to the ground, dead. He never knew to whom he was indebted for the honor of that blow with a clubbed rifle, nor did Horace take the pains to tell him.

"This is the first Miami I ever killed!" muttered he, stooping over and searching the body. He found a small bag of war-paint attached to the young warrior's belt.

"Ah, this is what I want!" he said, eagerly clutching the little bag. "I'll paint myself, and put on his clothes."

Taking the dead savage by the heels, he dragged him further into the forest, and rapidly divested it of the clothes found on the body. These he put on, even to the moccasins which some admiring Indian maiden had embroidered with beads. He then rubbed on the paint, and in a very few minutes he looked as much like a young Miami warrior as was possible for a white man to be.

"Horace—Horace!" he heard. "*Quick! get behind me!*" said a voice, calling in very low tones in the bushes behind him.

"Robert?" he asked.

"Yes—I am here."

"Well, I'm dressed like an Indian—so don't brain me," said Horace, going up to where his brother was standing. Robert looked at him in surprise.

"How's this—how came you by this?" he asked.

Horace explained.

"Then you can walk boldly up to the rascals," said Robert. "I could learn nothing for fear of being discovered. Go and see what you can learn, while I pick out two of the best horses in the lot over there."

Horace went away, going boldly up to the little group near the biggest lodge in the village. He there ascertained that the White Rose was in the wigwam of Grey Eagle, and that the eagerness of the women and children to see her was the cause of the excitement. Peering around, he obtained a glimpse of Minnie, sitting on a pile of buffalo robes, pallid and weeping. It was all the brave youth could do to refrain from entering the wigwam and plunging his knife into the heart of the treacherous Grey Eagle. But he knew it would cost him his life to do so, hence he did nothing but watch.

Pretty soon he returned to the forest to meet Robert and report.

They resolved to get an Indian garb for Robert, and make an effort to rescue Minnie.

An opportunity so presented itself, and another Indian was sent to the happy hunting grounds without knowing who sent him there.

Robert donned his dress and appropriated his war-paint, and soon transformed himself into a fine-looking Miami warrior.

Just before daylight, when the entire village was wrapped in profound slumber, they crept into the wigwam, where Minnie slept in charge of two old crones, cut the throats of the old women, and carried Minnie out to the edge of the forest, where three horses awaited them. They had taken them from the village after killing the guard. The two brothers then hastily put on their old buckskin hunting-shirts again, washed the paint from their faces, mounted their horses, and rode away.

"We must keep near the open country," said Robert, "for they will pursue us with their whole force, when nothing but the speed of these horses can save us."

"Give me weapons, brother," said Minnie, "and I'll never be taken alive again."

"We will try to save you without a fight, Minnie."

An hour later Minnie said:

"I hear the Indians yelling; we are pursued!"

"Yes, they are coming like the whirlwind. On—on, as fast as you can!"

Soon the Indians came in sight—nearly two score of them, all mounted and coming as fast as their horses could bring them.

"They will soon catch up with us," said Robert.

"I will never be taken alive!" said Minnie.

Bang!—bang! went a number of Indian rifles, and Horace's horse fell dead.



"Mount behind me!" cried Robert.

In a moment Horace was mounted on the back of the powerful horse, behind his brother.

"Sister," said Robert, bounding to her side, "in this hour of peril, make me a promise."

"I will, brother; what is it?"

"That you will dash on to the Ohio River, cross over, and make for the block-house on Deer Creek, without waiting for us. Horace and I can keep them at bay long enough to give you all the time you want. We will join you there. Go, now, for our horse is wounded, and is staggering; he will soon fall."

"Oh, brother! let me——"

"Away with you!" cried Robert, as his noble horse went down.

"May Heaven protect you, my brave brothers!" cried Minnie, as she dashed out of sight behind a copse of wood.

"Quick! get behind the horse, and give 'em a couple of balls!" cried Robert, kneeling behind the body of the horse, and firing. The foremost Indian fell from his horse.

It was Grey Eagle.

The Indians gathered about their dead chief, and howled like the demons they were. They sent a shower of bullets into the body of the horse.

Robert and Horace returned the fire, and two more warriors bit the dust.

The Indians then withdrew out of rifle-range, and commenced a regular siege.

The brothers had long-range rifles, and were able to keep them at a respectable distance for nearly a whole day.

"Minnie is safe now," said Robert, "and now we can turn our attention to getting away ourselves."

"A storm is coming up," cried Horace. "Whew! what a clap!"

A stunning report and a blinding flash of lightning told that the lightning had struck somewhere near.

The Indians fell back in the terror of the elements.

Robert and Horace dodged into the woods and escaped.

Minnie reached Deer Creek in safety, and the next day Robert and Horace joined her. But in accordance with their vow they went back, and never stopped until the last warrior in the band that murdered their parents was dead.

Every one killed was marked on the forehead, and the Miamis never ceased to dread their terrible NEMESIS.

[THE END.]

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